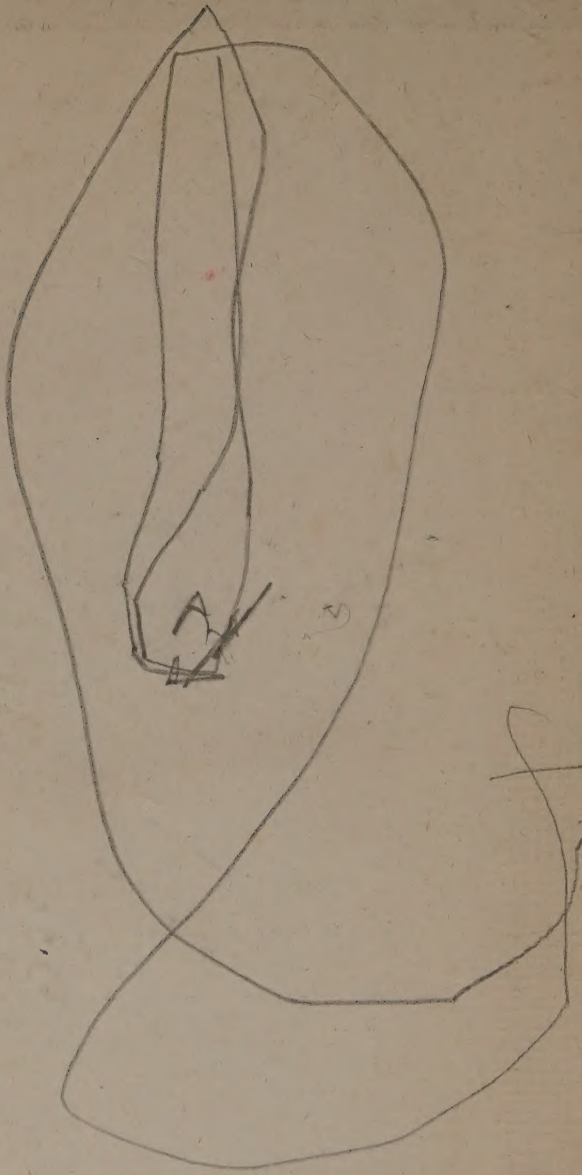
English Poems



ENGLISH POEMS

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SELECTED AND EDITED, WITH ILLUSTRATIVE AND EXPLANATORY NOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES

BY

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THE RESTORATION AND THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
(1660–1800)

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PREFACE

This volume is the third in a projected series of four volumes of English poems, intended especially for use with college classes. The principles governing the selection of poems, the editing of the texts, and the composition of the notes, in the series, were fully set forth in the preface to Vol. IV, and need not be repeated here at length. In brief, the method followed is (1) to choose poems representing the different phases of the work of poets and schools of poetry, (2) to print entire poems or entire parts of poems, whenever possible, (3) to follow the latest accessible text approved by the author, (4) to modernize spelling and punctuation as a rule, but to retain the original form when change would affect rhythm or rhyme, (5) in the notes to explain difficulties of expression and allusion, give the poet's view of poetry in his own words, furnish material (chiefly variant readings and literary sources) illustrating his mode of work, and throw some light, by extracts from contemporary criticism, upon the literary standards of different periods. So much of the most significant poetry of the Restoration and the eighteenth century consists of long reflective, satiric, or descriptive works that it has been necessary to include a good many extracts; but such poems, fortunately, afford many detachable passages that are both complete and representative. The number of minor poets, too, is necessarily large, but it is hoped that they have been duly subordinated to the *dii majores*.

In the preparation of notes for a volume of selections, an editor's obligations to previous editors are so great that to specify them would be tedious; it may suffice, instead,

to make a general acknowledgment of constant indebtedness to the standard editions of the poets represented and a general disclaimer of originality. On the other hand, it is only fair to say that even the best editions have not been followed blindly; that statements, references, and quotations have been verified whenever possible, and often corrected or made more definite; and that some of the material in the notes is new or is brought together for the first time.

I am indebted to the authorities of the Harvard College Library for courtesies in connection with the use of its rare collection of early editions; to Ginn & Co., for their kind permission to reprint parts of the notes in my edition of Collins in the Athenaeum Press Series; and to my colleague, Professor Henry B. Huntington, for valuable aid in the selection of poems. My greatest obligation is to my wife, who, besides preparing the copy, collating texts, and reading proof, has made the table of contents and the indices, prepared the glossary of Scotch words, and translated most of the passages in Greek, Latin, and French the translation of which is not otherwise accredited.

W. C. B.

Brown University
April 11, 1908

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SAMUEL BUTLER

FROM

HUDIBRAS

When civil fury first grew high,
And men fell out, they knew not why;
When hard words, jealousies, and fears
Set folks together by the ears,
And made them fight, like mad or drunk,
For Dame Religion as for punk,
Whose honesty they all durst swear for,
Though not a man of them knew wherefore;
When gospel-trumpeter, surrounded
With long-eared rout, to battle sounded,
And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
Was beat with fist instead of a stick;
Then did Sir Knight abandon dwelling,
And out he rode a colonelling.

. . . . . .

He was in logic a great critic,
Profoundly skilled in analytic.
He could distinguish, and divide
A hair 'twixt south and south-west side,
On either which he would dispute,
Confute, change hands, and still confute.
He'd undertake to prove by force
Of argument a man's no horse.
He'd prove a buzzard is no fowl,
And that a lord may be an owl,
A calf an alderman, a goose a justice,
And rooks committee-men and trustees.
He'd run in debt by disputation,
And pay with ratiocination.
All this by syllogism, true
In mood and figure, he would do.
For rhetoric, he could not ope
His mouth but out there flew a trope;

And when he happened to break off
I' th' middle of his speech, or cough,
H' had hard words ready to show why,
And tell what rules he did it by.
Else when with greatest art he spoke,
You 'd think he talked like other folk;
For all a rhetorician's rules
Teach nothing but to name his tools.

. . . . . .

In mathematics he was greater
Than Tycho Brahe or Erra Pater;
For he by geometric scale
Could take the size of pots of ale;
Resolve by sines and tangents, straight,
If bread or butter wanted weight;
And wisely tell what hour o' th' day
The clock does strike, by algebra.

. . . . . .

For his religion, it was fit
To match his learning and his wit:
'T was Presbyterian true blue;
For he was of that stubborn crew
Of errant saints whom all men grant
To be the true Church Militant;
Such as do build their faith upon
The holy text of pike and gun;
Decide all controversies by
Infallible artillery;
And prove their doctrine orthodox
By apostolic blows and knocks;
Call fire and sword and desolation
A godly, thorough reformation,
Which always must be carried on,
And still be doing, never done,
As if religion were intended
For nothing else but to be mended.
A sect whose chief devotion lies
In odd, perverse antipathies;
In falling out with that or this,
And finding somewhat still amiss;
More peevish, cross, and spleenatic

Than dog distract or monkey sick;
That with more care keep holy-day
The wrong than others the right way;
Compound for sins they are inclined to
By damning those they have no mind to;
Still so perverse and opposite,
As if they worshipped God for spite.
The selfsame thing they will abhor
One way, and long another for.
Free-will they one way disavow;
Another, nothing else allow:
All piety consists therein
In them; in other men, all sin.
Rather than fail they will defy
That which they love most tenderly,
Quarrel with minced pies, and disparage
Their best and dearest friend, plum-porridge;
Fat pig and goose itself oppose,
And blaspheme custard through the nose.

1663.

SIR GEORGE ETHERIDGE

TO A LADY

ASKING HOW LONG HE WOULD LOVE HER

It is not, Celia, in our power
To say how long our love will last;
It may be we within this hour
May lose those joys we now do taste:
The blessed, that immortal be,
From change in love are only free.

Then since we mortal lovers are,
Ask not how long our love may last;
But while it does, let us take care
Each minute be with pleasure passed:
Were it not madness to deny
To live because we're sure to die?

Before 1675. 1701.

CHARLES SACKVILLE, EARL OF DORSET

SONG

To all you ladies now at land
We men at sea indite,
But first would have you understand
How hard it is to write:
The Muses now, and Neptune too,
We must implore to write to you—
With a fa, la, la, la, la!

For though the Muses should prove kind,
And fill our empty brain,
Yet if rough Neptune rouse the wind
To wave the azure main,
Our paper, pen, and ink, and we
Roll up and down our ships at sea—
With a fa, la, la, la, la!

Then if we write not by each post,
Think not we are unkind,
Nor yet conclude our ships are lost
By Dutchmen or by wind:
Our tears we'll send a speedier way;
The tide shall bring 'em twice a day—
With a fa, la, la, la, la!

The King with wonder and surprise
Will swear the seas grow bold,
Because the tides will higher rise
Than e'er they did of old;
But let him know it is our tears
Bring floods of grief to Whitehall stairs—
With a fa, la, la, la, la!

Should foggy Opdam chance to know
Our sad and dismal story,
The Dutch would scorn so weak a foe,
And quit their fort at Goree;
For what resistance can they find
From men who 've left their hearts behind?—
With a fa, la, la, la, la!

Let wind and weather do its worst,
Be you to us but kind;
Let Dutchmen vapour, Spaniards curse,
No sorrow we shall find:
'T is then no matter how things go,
Or who 's our friend, or who 's our foe—
With a fa, la, la, la, la!

To pass our tedious hours away
We throw a merry main,
Or else at serious ombre play;
But why should we in vain
Each other's ruin thus pursue?
We were undone when we left you—
With a fa, la, la, la, la!

But now our fears tempestuous grow
And cast our hopes away,
Whilst you, regardless of our woe,
Sit careless at a play,
Perhaps permit some happier man
To kiss your hand or flirt your fan—
With a fa, la, la, la, la!

When any mournful tune you hear
That dies in ev'ry note,
As if it sighed with each man's care
For being so remote,
Think then how often love we 've made
To you, when all those tunes were played—
With a fa, la, la, la, la!

In justice you cannot refuse
To think of our distress,
When we for hopes of honour lose
Our certain happiness:
All those designs are but to prove
Ourselves more worthy of your love—
With a fa, la, la, la, la!

And now we 've told you all our loves,
And likewise all our fears,

In hopes this declaration moves
Some pity for our tears:
Let's hear of no inconstancy;
We have too much of that at sea—
With a fa, la, la, la, la!

1665.

ON A LADY WHO FANCIED HERSELF A BEAUTY

Dorinda's sparkling wit and eyes,
United, cast too fierce a light,
Which blazes high but quickly dies,
Pains not the heart but hurts the sight.

Love is a calmer, gentler joy;
Smooth are his looks, and soft his pace:
Her Cupid is a blackguard boy,
That runs his link full in your face.

Before 1680. 1701.

SONG

Phyllis, for shame! let us improve,
A thousand different ways,
Those few short moments snatched by love
From many tedious days.

If you want courage to despise
The censure of the grave,
Though Love's a tyrant in your eyes
Your heart is but a slave.

My love is full of noble pride,
Nor can it e'er submit
To let that fop, Discretion, ride
In triumph over it.

False friends I have, as well as you,
Who daily counsel me
Fame and ambition to pursue,
And leave off loving thee.

But when the least regard I show
To fools who thus advise,
May I be dull enough to grow
Most miserably wise!

Before 1680. 1750.

SIR CHARLES SEDLEY

SONG

Not, Celia, that I juster am
Or better than the rest;
For I would change each hour like them,
Were not my heart at rest.

But I am tied to very thee,
By ev'ry thought I have;
Thy face I only care to see,
Thy heart I only crave.

All that in woman is adored
In thy dear self I find
For the whole sex can but afford
The handsome and the kind.

Why then should I seek further store
And still make love anew?
When change itself can give no more,
'T is easy to be true.

Between 1668 and 1687. 1702.

LOVE STILL HAS SOMETHING OF THE SEA

Love still has something of the sea,
From whence his mother rose;
No time his slaves from love can free,
Nor give their thoughts repose.

They are becalmed in clearest days,
And in rough weather tost;
They wither under cold delays,
Or are in tempests lost.

One while they seem to touch the port;
Then straight into the main
Some angry wind in cruel sport
Their vessel drives again.

At first disdain and pride they fear;
Which if they chance to 'scape,
Rivals and falsehood soon appear
In a more dreadful shape.

By such degrees to joy they come,
And are so long withstood,
So slowly they receive the sum,
It hardly does them good.

'T is cruel to prolong a pain;
And to defer a bliss,
Believe me, gentle Hermione,
No less inhuman is.

An hundred thousand oaths your fears
Perhaps would not remove;
And if I gazed a thousand years,
I could no deeper love.

Between 1668 and 1687. 1702.

PHYLLIS IS MY ONLY JOY

Phyllis is my only joy;
Faithless as the winds or seas,
Sometimes coming, sometimes coy,
Yet she never fails to please:
If with a frown
I am cast down,
Phyllis, smiling
And beguiling,
Makes me happier than before.

Though, alas! too late I find
Nothing can her fancy fix,
Yet the moment she is kind
I forgive her all her tricks;

Which though I see,
I can't get free:
She deceiving,
I believing,—
What need lovers wish for more?

Between 1668 and 1687. 1702.

APHRA BEHN

SONG

Love in fantastic triumph sate,
Whilst bleeding hearts around him flowed,
For whom fresh pains he did create,
And strange tyrannic power he showed:
From thy bright eyes he took the fires
Which round about in sport he hurled;
But 't was from mine he took desires
Enough t' undo the amorous world.

From me he took his sighs and tears,
From thee his pride and cruelty;
From me his languishments and fears,
And every killing dart from thee:
Thus thou and I the god have armed,
And set him up a deity;
But my poor heart alone is harmed,
Whilst thine the victor is, and free.

1677.

JOHN WILMOT, EARL OF ROCHESTER

LOVE AND LIFE

All my past life is mine no more;
The flying hours are gone,
Like transitory dreams given o'er,
Whose images are kept in store
By memory alone.

The time that is to come is not;
How can it, then, be mine?

The present moment 's all my lot;
And that, as fast as it is got,
Phyllis, is only thine.

Then talk not of inconstancy,
False hearts, and broken vows;
If I by miracle can be
This live-long minute true to thee,
'T is all that Heaven allows.

1680.

A SONG

Absent from thee, I languish still;
Then ask me not when I return?
The straying fool 't will plainly kill
To wish all day, all night to mourn.

Dear, from thine arms then let me fly,
That my fantastic mind may prove
The torments it deserves to try,
That tears my fixed heart from my love.

When, wearied with a world of woe,
To thy safe bosom I retire,
Where love, and peace, and truth does flow,
May I, contented, there expire;

Lest, once more wandering from that heaven,
I fall on some base heart unblest,
Faithless to thee, false, unforgiven,
And lose my everlasting rest.

1680.

JOHN OLDHAM

FROM

TO THE MEMORY OF MR. CHARLES MORWENT

Thy soul within such silent pomp did keep
As if humanity were lulled asleep;
So gentle was thy pilgrimage beneath,
Time's unheard feet scarce make less noise,
Or the soft journey which a planet goes:

Life seemed all calm as its last breath,
A still tranquillity so hushed thy breast,
As if some halcyon were its guest,
And there had built her nest;
It hardly now enjoys a greater rest.
As that smooth sea which wears the name of Peace
Still with one even face appears,
And feels no tides to change it from its place,
No waves to alter the fair form it bears;
As that unspotted sky
Where Nile does want of rain supply
Is free from clouds, from storm is ever free;
So thy unvaried mind was always one,
And with such clear serenity still shone,
And caused thy little world to seem all temp'rate zone.

1710.

WILLIAM CONGREVE

AMORET

Fair Amoret is gone astray:
Pursue and seek her, ev'ry lover!
I 'll tell the signs by which you may
The wand'ring shepherdess discover.

Coquet and coy at once her air,
Both studied though both seem neglected;
Careless she is, with artful care,
Affecting to seem unaffected.

With skill her eyes dart ev'ry glance,
Yet change so soon you 'd ne'er suspect 'em;
For she 'd persuade they wound by chance,
Though certain aim and art direct 'em.

She likes herself, yet others hates
For that which in herself she prizes;
And while she laughs at them, forgets
She is the thing that she despises.

Before 1700. 1710.

JOHN DRYDEN

FROM

HEROIC STANZAS

CONSECRATED TO THE MEMORY OF HIS HIGHNESS, OLIVER, LATE LORD PROTECTOR OF THIS COMMONWEALTH

His grandeur he derived from Heav'n alone,
For he was great ere Fortune made him so;
And wars, like mists that rise against the sun,
Made him but greater seem, not greater grow.

No borrowed bays his temples did adorn,
But to our crown he did fresh jewels bring;
Nor was his virtue poisoned, soon as born,
With the too early thoughts of being king.

Fortune, that easy mistress of the young,
But to her ancient servants coy and hard,
Him at that age her favourites ranked among
When she her best-loved Pompey did discard.

He, private, marked the faults of others' sway,
And set as sea-marks for himself to shun;
Not like rash monarchs, who their youth betray
By acts their age too late would wish undone.

And yet dominion was not his design;
We owe that blessing not to him but Heav'n,
Which to fair acts unsought rewards did join,
Rewards that less to him than us were giv'n.

Our former chiefs, like sticklers of the war,
First sought t' inflame the parties, then to poise;
The quarrel loved, but did the cause abhor,
And did not strike to hurt but make a noise.

War, our consumption, was their gainful trade;
We inward bled, whilst they prolonged our pain:
He fought to end our fighting, and assayed
To stanch the blood by breathing of the vein.

Swift and resistless through the land he passed,
Like that bold Greek who did the East subdue,
And made to battles such heroic haste
As if on wings of victory he flew.

He fought, secure of fortune as of fame,
Till by new maps the island might be shown
Of conquests, which he strewed where'er he came,
Thick as the galaxy with stars is sown.

1758. 1759.

FROM

ASTREA REDUX

A POEM ON THE HAPPY RESTORATION AND RETURN OF HIS SACRED MAJESTY CHARLES THE SECOND

For his long absence Church and State did groan;
Madness the pulpit, faction seized the throne.
Experienced age in deep despair was lost,
To see the rebel thrive, the loyal crossed:
Youth, that with joys had unacquainted been,
Envied gray hairs that once good days had sêen;
We thought our sires, not with their own content,
Had, ere we came to age, our portion spent.
Nor could our nobles hope their bold attempt,
Who ruined crowns, would coronets exempt:
For when, by their designing leaders taught
To strike at pow'r which for themselves they sought,
The vulgar, gulled into rebellion, armed,
Their blood to action by the prize was warmed;
The sacred purple then and scarlet gown,
Like sanguine dye to elephants, was shown.
Thus when the bold Typhœus scaled the sky,
And forced great Jove from his own heav'n to fly
(What king, what crown, from treason's reach is free,
If Jove and heav'n can violated be?),
The lesser gods, that shared his prosp'rous state,
All suffered in the exiled Thund'rer's fate.
The rabble now such freedom did enjoy
As winds at sea, that use it to destroy:

Blind as the Cyclops, and as wild as he,
They owned a lawless, savage liberty,
Like that our painted ancestors so prized
Ere empire's arts their breasts had civilised.
How great were then our Charles his woes, who thus
Was forced to suffer for himself and us!
He, tossed by fate, and hurried up and down,
Heir to his father's sorrows with his crown,
Could taste no sweets of youth's desired age,
But found his life too true a pilgrimage.
Unconquered yet in that forlorn estate,
His manly courage overcame his fate.
His wounds he took, like Romans, on his breast,
Which by his virtue were with laurels drest.
As souls reach heav'n while yet in bodies pent,
So did he live above his banishment.

1660. 1660.

INCANTATION

You twice ten hundred deities,
To whom we daily sacrifice;
You powers that dwell with Fate below,
And see what men are doomed to do,
Where elements in discord dwell;
Thou god of sleep, arise and tell
Great Zempoalla what strange fate
Must on her dismal vision wait!
By the croaking of the toad,
In their caves that make abode,
Earthy, dun, that pants for breath,
With her swelled sides full of death;
By the crested adders' pride,
That along the clifts do glide;
By thy visage fierce and black;
By the death's head on thy back;
By the twisted serpents placed
For a girdle round thy waist;
By the hearts of gold that deck
Thy breast, thy shoulders, and thy neck;

From thy sleepy mansion rise,
And open thy unwilling eyes,
While bubbling springs their music keep,
That use to lull thee in thy sleep.

1664.

SONG

I feed a flame within, which so torments me
That it both pains my heart and yet contents me;
'T is such a pleasing smart, and I so love it,
That I had rather die than once remove it.

Yet he for whom I grieve shall never know it;
My tongue does not betray, nor my eyes show it:
Not a sigh nor a tear my pain discloses,
But they fall silently, like dew on roses.

Thus, to prevent my love from being cruel,
My heart 's the sacrifice, as 't is the fuel;
And while I suffer this to give him quiet,
My faith rewards my love, though he deny it.

On his eyes will I gaze, and there delight me;
While I conceal my love, no frown can fright me:
To be more happy I dare not aspire,
Nor can I fall more low, mounting no higher.

1667.

FROM

ANNUS MIRABILIS

THE WAR WITH HOLLAND

And now, reduced on equal terms to fight,
Their ships like wasted patrimonies show,
Where the thin scatt'ring trees admit the light
And shun each other's shadows as they grow.

The warlike Prince had severed from the rest
Two giant ships, the pride of all the main;
Which with his one so vigorously he pressed,
And flew so home, they could not rise again.

Already battered by his lee they lay;
In vain upon the passing winds they call;
The passing winds through their torn canvas play,
And flagging sails on heartless sailors fall.

Their opened sides receive a gloomy light,
Dreadful as day let in to shades below;
Without, grim Death rides barefaced in their sight,
And urges ent'ring billows as they flow:

When one dire shot, the last they could supply,
Close by the board the Prince's mainmast bore;
All three now helpless by each other lie,
And this offends not and those fear no more.

So have I seen some fearful hare maintain
A course, till tired before the dog she lay,
Who, stretched behind her, pants upon the plain,
Past pow'r to kill, as she to get away:

With his lolled tongue he faintly licks his prey;
His warm breath blows her flix up as she lies;
She, trembling, creeps upon the ground away,
And looks back to him with beseeching eyes.

1666. 1667.

THE GREAT LONDON FIRE

The diligence of trades, and noiseful gain,
And luxury, more late, asleep were laid;
All was the Night's, and in her silent reign
No sound the rest of Nature did invade.

In this deep quiet, from what source unknown,
Those seeds of fire their fatal birth disclose;
And, first, few scatt'ring sparks about were blown,
Big with the flames that to our ruin rose.

Then in some close-pent room it crept along,
And, smould'ring as it went, in silence fed;
Till th' infant monster, with devouring strong,
Walked boldly upright with exalted head.

Now, like some rich or mighty murderer,
Too great for prison, which he breaks with gold,
Who fresher for new mischiefs does appear,
And dares the world to tax him with the old,

So 'scapes th' insulting fire his narrow jail,
And makes small outlets into open air;
There the fierce winds his tender force assail,
And beat him downward to his first repair.

The winds, like crafty courtezans, withheld
His flames from burning but to blow them more;
And, every fresh attempt, he is repelled
With faint denials weaker than before.

And now, no longer letted of his prey,
He leaps up at it with enraged desire;
O'erlooks the neighbours with a wide survey,
And nods at every house his threat'ning fire.

The ghosts of traitors from the bridge descend,
With bold fanatic spectres to rejoice;
About the fire into a dance they bend,
And sing their Sabbath notes with feeble voice.

Our guardian angel saw them where they sate
Above the palace of our slumb'ring King;
He sighed, abandoning his charge to Fate,
And, drooping, oft looked back upon the wing.

At length the crackling noise and dreadful blaze
Called up some waking lover to the sight;
And long it was ere he the rest could raise,
Whose heavy eyelids yet were full of night.

The next to danger, hot pursued by Fate,
Half-clothed, half-naked, hastily retire;
And frighted mothers strike their breasts too late,
For helpless infants left amidst the fire.

Their cries soon waken all the dwellers near.
Now murmuring noises rise in every street;
The more remote run stumbling with their fear,
And in the dark men jostle as they meet.

So weary bees in little cells repose;
But if night-robbers lift the well-stored hive,
An humming through their waxen city grows,
And out upon each other's wings they drive.

Now streets grow thronged and busy as by day:
Some run for buckets to the hallowed quire;
Some cut the pipes, and some the engines play;
And some more bold mount ladders to the fire.

In vain: for from the east a Belgian wind
His hostile breath through the dry rafters sent;
The flames, impelled, soon left their foes behind,
And forward with a wanton fury went.

1666. 1667.

PROLOGUE TO "AURENG-ZEBE"

Our author, by experience, finds it true
'T is much more hard to please himself than you,
And, out of no feigned modesty, this day
Damns his laborious trifle of a play;
Not that it 's worse than what before he writ,
But he has now another taste of wit,
And, to confess a truth, though out of time,
Grows weary of his long-loved mistress, Rhyme:
Passion 's too fierce to be in fetters bound,
And nature flies him like enchanted ground.
What verse can do he has performed in this,
Which he presumes the most correct of his:
But, spite of all his pride, a secret shame
Invades his breast at Shakespeare's sacred name;
Awed when he hears his god-like Romans rage,
He, in a just despair, would quit the stage,
And to an age less polished, more unskilled,
Does with disdain the foremost honours yield.
As with the greater dead he dares not strive,
He would not match his verse with those who live;
Let him retire, betwixt two ages cast,
The first of this and hindmost of the last.
A losing gamester, let him sneak away;
He bears no ready money from the play.

The fate which governs poets thought it fit
He should not raise his fortunes by his wit.
The clergy thrive, and the litigious bar;
Dull heroes fatten with the spoils of war;
All southern vices, Heav'n be praised, are here;
But wit 's a luxury you think too dear.
When you to cultivate the plant are loth,
'T is a shrewd sign 't was never of your growth;
And wit in northern climates will not blow,
Except, like orange-trees, 't is housed from snow.
There needs no care to put a play-house down,
'T is the most desert place of all the town:
We and our neighbours, to speak proudly, are,
Like monarchs, ruined with expensive war;
While, like wise English, unconcerned you sit,
And see us play the tragedy of wit.

1675. 1675.

FAREWELL, UNGRATEFUL TRAITOR

Farewell, ungrateful traitor!
Farewell, my perjured swain!
Let never injured creature
Believe a man again.
The pleasure of possessing
Surpasses all expressing;
But 't is too short a blessing,
And love too long a pain.

'T is easy to deceive us,
In pity of your pain;
But when we love, you leave us
To rail at you in vain.
Before we have descried it,
There is no bliss beside it;
But she that once has tried it
Will never love again.

The passion you pretended,
Was only to obtain;
But when the charm is ended,
The charmer you disdain.

Your love by ours we measure,
Till we have lost our treasure;
But dying is a pleasure,
When living is a pain.

1681.

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL

FROM

PART I

The Jews, a headstrong, moody, murm'ring race
As ever tried th' extent and stretch of grace;
God's pampered people, whom, debauched with ease,
No king could govern nor no God could please
(Gods they had tried of every shape and size
That godsmiths could produce or priests devise);
These Adam-wits, too fortunately free,
Began to dream they wanted liberty;
And when no rule, no precedent, was found
Of men by laws less circumscribed and bound,
They led their wild desires to woods and caves,
And thought that all but savages were slaves.
They who, when Saul was dead, without a blow
Made foolish Ishbosheth the crown forego;
Who banished David did from Hebron bring,
And with a general shout proclaimed him king;
Those very Jews who at their very best
Their humour more than loyalty exprest,
Now wondered why so long they had obeyed
An idol monarch which their hands had made;
Thought they might ruin him they could create,
Or melt him to that golden calf, a State.
But these were random bolts; no formed design
Nor interest made the factious crowd to join.
The sober part of Israel, free from stain,
Well knew the value of a peaceful reign,
And, looking backward with a wise affright,
Saw seams of wounds dishonest to the sight;
In contemplation of whose ugly scars,
They cursed the memory of civil wars.

The moderate sort of men, thus qualified,
Inclined the balance to the better side;
And David's mildness managed it so well
The bad found no occasion to rebel.
But when to sin our biassed nature leans,
The careful Devil is still at hand with means,
And providently pimps for ill desires:
The good old cause, revived, a plot requires;
Plots, true or false, are necessary things
To raise up commonwealths and ruin kings.
Th' inhabitants of old Jerusalem
Were Jebusites; the town so called from them,
And theirs the native right.
But when the chosen people grew more strong,
The rightful cause at length became the wrong;
And every loss the men of Jebus bore,
They still were thought God's enemies the more.
Thus worn and weakened, well or ill content,
Submit they must to David's government:
Impoverished and deprived of all command,
Their taxes doubled as they lost their land;
And, what was harder yet to flesh and blood,
Their gods disgraced, and burnt like common wood.
This set the heathen priesthood in a flame,
For priests of all religions are the same:
Of whatsoe'er descent their godhead be,
Stock, stone, or other homely pedigree,
In his defence his servants are as bold
As if he had been born of beaten gold.
The Jewish rabbins, though their enemies,
In this conclude them honest men and wise;
For 't was their duty, all the learnèd think,
To espouse His cause by Whom they eat and drink.
From hence began that Plot, the nation's curse,
Bad in itself but represented worse,
Raised in extremes and in extremes decried,
With oaths affirmed, with dying vows denied,
Not weighed or winnowed by the multitude,
But swallowed in the mass, unchewed and crude.
Some truth there was, but dashed and brewed with lies
To please the fools and puzzle all the wise.

Succeeding times did equal folly call
Believing nothing or believing all.
Th' Egyptian rites the Jebusites embraced,
Where gods were recommended by their taste;
Such sav'ry deities must needs be good
As served at once for worship and for food.
By force they could not introduce these gods,
For ten to one in former days was odds;
So fraud was used, the sacrificer's trade—
Fools are more hard to conquer than persuade.
Their busy teachers mingled with the Jews,
And raked for converts even the court and stews;
Which Hebrew priests the more unkindly took,
Because the fleece accompanies the flock.
Some thought they God's anointed meant to slay
By guns, invented since full many a day:
Our author swears it not; but who can know
How far the Devil and Jebusites may go?
This Plot, which failed for want of common sense,
Had yet a deep and dangerous consequence:
For, as when raging fevers boil the blood,
The standing lake soon floats into a flood,
And every hostile humour which before
Slept quiet in its channels bubbles o'er,
So several factions from this first ferment
Work up to foam and threat the government.
Some by their friends, more by themselves thought wise,
Opposed the power to which they could not rise.
Some had in courts been great, and, thrown from thence,
Like fiends were hardened in impenitence.
Some, by their monarch's fatal mercy grown
From pardoned rebels kinsmen to the throne,
Were raised in pow'r and public office high—
Strong bands, if bands ungrateful men could tie.
Of these the false Achitophel was first,
A name to all succeeding ages curst;
For close designs and crookèd counsels fit,
Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit,
Restless, unfixed in principles and place,
In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace;
A fiery soul, which, working out its way,

Fretted the pigmy body to decay,
And o'er-informed the tenement of clay.
A daring pilot in extremity,
Pleased with the danger when the waves went high,
He sought the storms; but, for a calm unfit,
Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.
Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide;
Else why should he, with wealth and honour blest,
Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?
Punish a body which he could not please,
Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?
And all to leave what with his toil he won
To that unfeathered, two-legged thing, a son,
Got while his soul did huddled notions try,
And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.
In friendship false, implacable in hate,
Resolved to ruin or to rule the state,
To compass this the triple bond he broke,
The pillars of the public safety shook,
And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke;
Then, seized with fear, yet still affecting fame,
Usurped a patriot's all-atoning name.
So easy still it proves in factious times
With public zeal to cancel private crimes.
How safe is treason and how sacred ill,
Where none can sin against the people's will,
Where crowds can wink and no offence be known,
Since in another's guilt they find their own!
Yet fame deserved no enemy can grudge;
The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge:
In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abbethdin
With more discerning eyes or hands more clean,
Unbribed, unsought, the wretched to redress,
Swift of despatch and easy of access.
Oh, had he been content to serve the crown
With virtues only proper to the gown,
Or had the rankness of the soil been freed
From cockle that oppressed the noble seed,
David for him his tuneful harp had strung,
And Heaven had wanted one immortal song.

But wild Ambition loves to slide, not stand,
And Fortune's ice prefers to Virtue's land.
Achitophel, grown weary to possess
A lawful fame and lazy happiness,
Disdained the golden fruit to gather free,
And lent the crowd his arm to shake the tree.
Now, manifest of crimes contrived long since,
He stood at bold defiance with his Prince,
Held up the buckler of the people's cause
Against the crown, and skulked behind the laws.
The wished occasion of the Plot he takes:
Some circumstances finds, but more he makes;
By buzzing emissaries fills the ears
Of list'ning crowds with jealousies and fears
Of arbitrary counsels brought to light,
And proves the King himself a Jebusite.
Weak arguments! which yet he knew full well
Were strong with people easy to rebel;
For, governed by the moon, the giddy Jews
Tread the same track when she the prime renews,
And once in twenty years, their scribes record,
By natural instinct they change their lord.
Achitophel still wants a chief, and none
Was found so fit as warlike Absalon:
Not that he wished his greatness to create,
For politicians neither love nor hate;
But—for he knew his title, not allowed,
Would keep him still depending on the crowd—
That kingly pow'r, thus ebbing out, might be
Drawn to the dregs of a democracy.
Him he attempts with studied arts to please,
And sheds his venom in such words as these:
"Auspicious prince, at whose nativity
Some royal planet ruled the southern sky;
Thy longing country's darling and desire;
Their cloudy pillar and their guardian fire;
Their second Moses, whose extended wand
Divides the seas, and shows the promised land;
Whose dawning day, in every distant age,
Has exercised the sacred prophet's rage;
The people's pray'r, the glad diviner's theme;

The young men's vision, and the old men's dream;
Thee, saviour, thee the nation's vows confess,
And, never satisfied with seeing, bless;
Swift, unbespoken pomps thy steps proclaim,
And stammering babes are taught to lisp thy name.
How long wilt thou the general joy detain,
Starve and defraud the people of thy reign,
Content ingloriously to pass thy days
Like one of virtue's fools that feeds on praise,
Till thy fresh glories, which now shine so bright,
Grow stale and tarnish with our daily sight?
Believe me, royal youth, thy fruit must be
Or gathered ripe or rot upon the tree.

. . . . . .

Leave the warm people no considering time,
For then rebellion may be thought a crime.
Prevail yourself of what occasion gives,
But try your title while your father lives;
And, that your arms may have a fair pretence,
Proclaim you take them in the King's defence,
Whose sacred life each minute would expose
To plots from seeming friends and secret foes.
And who can sound the depth of David's soul?
Perhaps his fear his kindness may control:
He fears his brother, though he loves his son,
For plighted vows too late to be undone.
If so, by force he wishes to be gained,
Like women's lechery to seem constrained.
Doubt not; but when he most affects the frown,
Commit a pleasing rape upon the crown.
Secure his person to secure your cause:
They who possess the Prince possess the laws."

He said, and this advice above the rest
With Absalom's mild nature suited best.
Unblamed of life (ambition set aside),
Not stained with cruelty nor puffed with pride,
How happy had he been, if Destiny
Had higher placed his birth or not so high!
His kingly virtues might have claimed a throne,
And blessed all other countries but his own.
But charming greatness since so few refuse,

'T is juster to lament him than accuse.
Strong were his hopes a rival to remove,
With blandishments to gain the public love,
To head the faction while their zeal was hot,
And popularly prosecute the plot.
To further this, Achitophel unites
The malcontents of all the Israelites,
Whose differing parties he could wisely join
For several ends to serve the same design.
The best (and of the princes some were such),
Who thought the pow'r of monarchy too much,
Mistaken men and patriots in their hearts,
Not wicked but seduced by impious arts,
By these the springs of property were bent
And wound so high they cracked the government.
The next for interest sought t' embroil the state
To sell their duty at a dearer rate,
And make their Jewish markets of the throne,
Pretending public good to serve their own.
Others thought kings an useless, heavy load,
Who cost too much and did too little good;
These were for laying honest David by
On principles of pure good husbandry.
With them joined all th' haranguers of the throng,
That thought to get preferment by the tongue.
Who follow next a double danger bring,
Not only hating David but the King:
The Solymæan rout, well versed of old
In godly faction, and in treason bold,
Cow'ring and quaking at a conqu'ror's sword
But lofty to a lawful prince restored,
Saw with disdain an Ethnic plot begun,
And scorned by Jebusites to be outdone.
Hot Levites headed these; who, pulled before
From th' ark, which in the Judges' days they bore,
Resumed their cant, and with a zealous cry
Pursued their old beloved theocracy,
Where Sanhedrin and priest enslaved the nation,
And justified their spoils by inspiration—
For who so fit for reign as Aaron's race,
If once dominion they could found in grace?
These led the pack; though not of surest scent,

Yet deepest mouthed against the government.
A numerous host of dreaming saints succeed,
Of the true old enthusiastic breed;
'Gainst form and order they their power employ,
Nothing to build and all things to destroy.
But far more numerous was the herd of such
Who think too little and who talk too much:
These out of mere instinct, they knew not why,
Adored their fathers' God and property,
And by the same blind benefit of Fate
The Devil and the Jebusite did hate;
Born to be saved, even in their own despite,
Because they could not help believing right.
Such were the tools; but a whole Hydra more
Remains of sprouting heads, too long to score.
Some of their chiefs were princes of the land:
In the first rank of these did Zimri stand,
A man so various that he seemed to be
Not one but all mankind's epitome;
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,
Was everything by starts and nothing long,
But in the course of one revolving moon
Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon,
Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
Blest madman, who could every hour employ
With something new to wish or to enjoy!
Railing and praising were his usual themes,
And both, to show his judgment, in extremes:
So over violent or over civil
That every man with him was God or Devil.
In squand'ring wealth was his peculiar art:
Nothing went unrewarded but desart;
Beggared by fools whom still he found too late,
He had his jest, and they had his estate.
He laughed himself from court; then sought relief
By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief,
For, spite of him, the weight of business fell
On Absalom and wise Achitophel;
Thus wicked but in will, of means bereft,
He left not faction, but of that was left.

1680?–81. 1681.

FROM

PART II

Doeg, though without knowing how or why,
Made still a blund'ring kind of melody;
Spurred boldly on, and dashed through thick and thin,
Through sense and nonsense, never out nor in;
Free from all meaning, whether good or bad,
And, in one word, heroically mad.
He was too warm on picking-work to dwell,
But fagotted his notions as they fell,
And if they rhymed and rattled, all was well.
Spiteful he is not, though he wrote a satire,
For still there goes some thinking to ill-nature;
He need no more than birds and beasts to think,
All his occasions are to eat and drink.
If he call "rogue" and "rascal" from a garret,
He means you no more mischief than a parrot:
The words for friend and foe alike were made;
To fetter 'em in verse is all his trade. . . . .
Let him be gallows-free by my consent,
And nothing suffer since he nothing meant:
Hanging supposes human soul and reason;
This animal's below committing treason.
Shall he be hanged who never could rebel?
That's a preferment for Achitophel.

. . . . . .

Now stop your noses, readers, all and some,
For here's a tun of midnight work to come,
Og from a treason-tavern rolling home.
Round as a globe, and liquored ev'ry chink,
Goodly and great he sails behind his link.
With all this bulk there's nothing lost in Og,
For ev'ry inch that is not fool is rogue:
A monstrous mass of foul corrupted matter,
As all the devils had spewed to make the batter.
When wine has given him courage to blaspheme,
He curses God, but God before cursed him;
And if man could have reason, none has more,
That made his paunch so rich and him so poor.
With wealth he was not trusted, for Heaven knew

What 't was of old to pamper up a Jew;
To what would he on quail and pheasant swell
That ev'n on tripe and carrion could rebel?
But though Heav'n made him poor, with rev'rence speaking,
He never was a poet of God's making:
The midwife laid her hand on his thick skull,
With this prophetic blessing, "Be thou dull;"
Drink, swear, and roar, forbear no lewd delight
Fit for thy bulk, do anything but write.
Thou art of lasting make, like thoughtless men,
A strong nativity—but for the pen;
Eat opium, mingle arsenic in thy drink,
Still thou may'st live, avoiding pen and ink.
I see, I see, 't is counsel given in vain,
For treason botched in rhyme will be thy bane.
Rhyme is the rock on which thou art to wreck;
'T is fatal to thy fame and to thy neck.
Why should thy metre good king David blast?
A psalm of his will surely be thy last.
Dar'st thou presume in verse to meet thy foes,
Thou whom the penny pamphlet foiled in prose?
Doeg, whom God for mankind's mirth has made,
O'ertops thy talent in thy very trade;
Doeg to thee, thy paintings are so coarse,
A poet is, though he 's the poet's horse.
A double noose thou on thy neck dost pull,
For writing treason and for writing dull;
To die for faction is a common evil,
But to be hanged for nonsense is the Devil.
Hadst thou the glories of thy king exprest,
Thy praises had been satire at the best;
But thou, in clumsy verse, unlicked, unpointed,
Hast shamefully defied the Lord's anointed.
I will not rake the dunghill of thy crimes,
For who would read thy life that reads thy rhymes?
But of King David's foes be this the doom—
May all be like the young man Absalom;
And for my foes, may this their blessing be—
To talk like Doeg and to write like thee.

1682.

MAC FLECKNOE

OR, A SATIRE ON THE TRUE BLUE PROTESTANT POET, T. S.

All human things are subject to decay,
And when Fate summons, monarchs must obey.
This Flecknoe found, who, like Augustus, young
Was called to empire and had governed long;
In prose and verse was owned, without dispute,
Through all the realms of Nonsense, absolute.
This aged prince, now flourishing in peace,
And blest with issue of a large increase,
Worn out with business, did at length debate
To settle the succession of the state;
And, pond'ring which of all his sons was fit
To reign and wage immortal war with wit,
Cried, "'T is resolved! for nature pleads that he
Should only rule who most resembles me.
Shadwell alone my perfect image bears,
Mature in dulness from his tender years;
Shadwell alone of all my sons is he
Who stands confirmed in full stupidity.
The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,
But Shadwell never deviates into sense.
Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
Strike through and make a lucid interval;
But Shadwell's genuine night admits no ray,
His rising fogs prevail upon the day.
Besides, his goodly fabric fills the eye,
And seems designed for thoughtless majesty;
Thoughtless as monarch oaks that shade the plain,
And, spread in solemn state, supinely reign.
Heywood and Shirley were but types of thee,
Thou last great prophet of tautology.
Even I, a dunce of more renown than they,
Was sent before but to prepare thy way,
And, coarsely clad in Norwich drugget, came
To teach the nations in thy greater name.
My warbling lute, the lute I whilom strung
When to King John of Portugal I sung,
Was but the prelude to that glorious day
When thou on silver Thames didst cut thy way,

With well-timed oars, before the royal barge,
Swelled with the pride of thy celestial charge,
And big with hymn, commander of an host;
The like was ne'er in Epsom blankets tost.
Methinks I see the new Arion sail,
The lute still trembling underneath thy nail:
At thy well-sharpened thumb, from shore to shore
The treble squeaks for fear, the basses roar; . . . .
About thy boat the little fishes throng,
As at the morning toast that floats along.
Sometimes, as prince of thy harmonious band,
Thou wield'st thy papers in thy threshing hand;
St. André's feet ne'er kept more equal time,
Not ev'n the feet of thy own 'Psyche's' rhyme,
Though they in number as in sense excel;
So just, so like tautology, they fell
That, pale with envy, Singleton forswore
The lute and sword which he in triumph bore,
And vowed he ne'er would act Villerius more."
Here stopped the good old sire, and wept for joy,
In silent raptures of the hopeful boy.
All arguments, but most his plays, persuade
That for anointed dulness he was made.

Close to the walls which fair Augusta bind
(The fair Augusta much to fears inclined),
An ancient fabric, raised t' inform the sight,
There stood of yore, and Barbican it hight;
A watch-tower once, but now, so Fate ordains,
Of all the pile an empty name remains. . . . .
Near these a Nursery erects its head,
Where queens are formed and future heroes bred,
Where unfledged actors learn to laugh and cry, ...
And little Maximins the gods defy.
Great Fletcher never treads in buskins here,
Nor greater Jonson dares in socks appear;
But gentle Simkin just reception finds
Amidst this monument of vanished minds;
Pure clinches the suburbian Muse affords,
And Panton waging harmless war with words.
Here Flecknoe, as a place to fame well known,
Ambitiously designed his Shadwell's throne.

For ancient Decker prophesied long since
That in this pile should reign a mighty prince,
Born for a scourge of wit and flail of sense,
To whom true dulness should some "Psyches" owe,
But worlds of "Misers" from his pen should flow;
"Humourists" and Hypocrites it should produce,
Whole Raymond families and tribes of Bruce.
Now empress Fame had published the renown
Of Shadwell's coronation through the town.
Roused by report of fame, the nations meet
From near Bunhill and distant Watling Street.
No Persian carpets spread th' imperial way,
But scattered limbs of mangled poets lay;
From dusty shops neglected authors come; . . . .
Much Heywood, Shirley, Ogleby there lay,
But loads of Shadwell almost choked the way.
Bilked stationers for yeomen stood prepared,
And Herringman was captain of the guard.
The hoary prince in majesty appeared,
High on a throne of his own labours reared.
At his right hand our young Ascanius sate,
Rome's other hope and pillar of the state;
His brows thick fogs instead of glories grace,
And lambent dulness played around his face.
As Hannibal did to the altars come,
Sworn by his sire a mortal foe to Rome,
So Shadwell swore, nor should his vow be vain,
That he till death true dulness would maintain,
And in his father's right and realm's defence
Ne'er to have peace with wit nor truce with sense.
The king himself the sacred unction made,
As king by office and as priest by trade.
In his sinister hand, instead of ball,
He placed a mighty mug of potent ale;
"Love's Kingdom" to his right he did convey,
At once his sceptre and his rule of sway,
Whose righteous lore the prince had practised young,
And from whose loins recorded "Psyche" sprung;
His temples, last, with poppies were o'erspread,
That, nodding, seemed to consecrate his head.
Just at that point of time, if fame not lie,

On his left hand twelve reverend owls did fly:
So Romulus, 't is sung, by Tiber's brook,
Presage of sway from twice six vultures took.
Th' admiring throng loud acclamations make,
And omens of his future empire take.
The sire then shook the honours of his head,
And from his brows damps of oblivion shed
Full on the filial dulness: long he stood,
Repelling from his breast the raging god;
At length burst out in this prophetic mood:
"Heavens bless my son! from Ireland let him reign,
To far Barbadoes on the western main;
Of his dominion may no end be known,
And greater than his father's be his throne;
Beyond 'Love's Kingdom' let him stretch his pen!"
He paused, and all the people cried, "Amen!"
Then thus continued he: "My son, advance
Still in new impudence, new ignorance.
Success let others teach; learn thou from me
Pangs without birth, and fruitless industry.
Let 'Virtuosos' in five years be writ,
Yet not one thought accuse thy toil of wit;
Let gentle George in triumph tread the stage,
Make Dorimant betray and Loveit rage;
Let Cully, Cockwood, Fopling, charm the pit,
And in their folly show the writer's wit:
Yet still thy fools shall stand in thy defence,
And justify their author's want of sense.
Let 'em be all by thy own model made
Of dulness, and desire no foreign aid,
That they to future ages may be known,
Not copies drawn, but issue of thy own.
Nay, let thy men of wit, too, be the same,
All full of thee, and differing but in name.
But let no alien Sedley interpose,
To lard with wit thy hungry Epsom prose.
And when false flowers of rhetoric thou wouldst cull,
Trust nature: do not labour to be dull,
But write thy best, and top; and in each line
Sir Formal's oratory will be thine.
Sir Formal, though unsought, attends thy quill,

And does thy northern dedications fill.
Nor let false friends seduce thy mind to fame
By arrogating Jonson's hostile name;
Let father Flecknoe fire thy mind with praise,
And uncle Ogleby thy envy raise.
Thou art my blood, where Jonson has no part:
What share have we in nature or in art?
Where did his wit on learning fix a brand,
And rail at arts he did not understand?
Where made he love in Prince Nicander's vein,
Or swept the dust in Psyche's humble strain? . . . .
When did his Muse from Fletcher scenes purloin,
As thou whole Eth'ridge dost transfuse to thine?—
But so transfused as oil on waters flow:
His always floats above, thine sinks below.
This is thy province, this thy wondrous way,
New humours to invent for each new play;
This is that boasted bias of thy mind,
By which one way to dulness 't is inclined,
Which makes thy writings lean on one side still,
And, in all changes, that way bends thy will.
Nor let thy mountain belly make pretence
Of likeness; thine 's a tympany of sense.
A tun of man in thy large bulk is writ,
But sure thou 'rt but a kilderkin of wit.
Like mine, thy gentle numbers feebly creep:
Thy tragic Muse gives smiles; thy comic, sleep.
With whate'er gall thou sett'st thyself to write,
Thy inoffensive satires never bite;
In thy feloníous heart though venom lies,
It does but touch thy Irish pen and dies.
Thy genius calls thee not to purchase fame
In keen iambics, but mild anagram.
Leave writing plays, and choose for thy command
Some peaceful province in Acrostic Land:
There thou mayst wings display, and altars raise,
And torture one poor word ten thousand ways;
Or if thou wouldst thy diff'rent talents suit,
Set thy own songs, and sign them to thy lute."
He said; but his last words were scarcely heard;

For Bruce and Longville had a trap prepared,
And down they sent the yet declaiming bard.
Sinking, he left his drugget robe behind,
Borne upwards by a subterranean wind:
The mantle fell to the young prophet's part,
With double portion of his father's art.

1682. 1682.

FROM

RELIGIO LAICI

Dim as the borrowed beams of moon and stars
To lonely, weary, wand'ring travellers,
Is Reason to the soul; and as on high
Those rolling fires discover but the sky,
Not light us here, so Reason's glimmering ray
Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
But guide us upward to a better day.
And as those nightly tapers disappear
When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere,
So pale grows Reason at Religion's sight,
So dies, and so dissolves in supernatural light.
Some few, whose lamp shone brighter, have been led,
From cause to cause, to Nature's secret head,
And found that one First Principle must be;
But what or who that Universal He—
Whether some soul encompassing this ball,
Unmade, unmoved, yet making, moving all;
Or various atoms' interfering dance
Leapt into form, the noble work of chance;
Or this great All was from eternity,—
Not ev'n the Stagyrite himself could see,
And Epicurus guessed as well as he.
As blindly groped they for a future state,
As rashly judged of Providence and Fate.
But least of all could their endeavours find
What most concerned the good of human kind;
For happiness was never to be found,
But vanished from 'em like enchanted ground.
One thought Content the good to be enjoyed;
This every little accident destroyed:

The wiser madmen did for Virtue toil,
A thorny or at best a barren soil:
In Pleasure some their glutton souls would steep,
But found their line too short, the well too deep,
And leaky vessels which no bliss could keep.
Thus anxious thoughts in endless circles roll,
Without a center where to fix the soul.
In this wild maze their vain endeavours end:
How can the less the greater comprehend,
Or finite Reason reach Infinity?
For what could fathom God were more than He.

. . . . . .

"Oh, but," says one, "Tradition set aside,
Where can we hope for an unerring guide?
For since th' original Scripture has been lost,
All copies disagreeing, maimed the most,
Or Christian faith can have no certain ground,
Or truth in Church tradition must be found."
Such an omniscient Church we wish indeed;
'T were worth both Testaments, and cast in the Creed.
But if this mother be a guide so sure
As can all doubts resolve, all truth secure,
Then her infallibility, as well,
Where copies are corrupt or lame can tell,
Restore lost canon with as little pains
As truly explicate what still remains;
Which yet no Council dare pretend to do,
Unless, like Esdras, they could write it new.
Strange confidence, still to interpret true,
Yet not be sure that all they have explained
Is in the blest original contained.

. . . . . .

In times o'ergrown with rust and ignorance,
A gainful trade their clergy did advance.
When want of learning kept the laymen low,
And none but priests were authorized to know,
When what small knowledge was in them did dwell,
And he a god who could but read or spell,
Then Mother Church did mightily prevail;
She parcelled out the Bible by retail,

But still expounded what she sold or gave,
To keep it in her power to damn and save.
Scripture was scarce, and, as the market went,
Poor laymen took salvation on content,
As needy men take money, good or bad;
God's word they had not, but the priest's they had.
Yet whate'er false conveyances they made,
The lawyer still was certain to be paid.
In those dark times they learned their knack so well
That by long use they grew infallible.
At last a knowing age began t' inquire
If they the Book or that did them inspire;
And, making narrower search, they found, though late,
That what they thought the priest's was their estate,
Taught by the will produced, the written word,
How long they had been cheated on record.
Then every man, who saw the title fair,
Claimed a child's part and put in for a share,
Consulted soberly his private good,
And saved himself as cheap as e'er he could.
'T is true, my friend (and far be flattery hence),
This good had full as bad a consequence:
The Book thus put in every vulgar hand,
Which each presumed he best could understand,
The common rule was made the common prey,
And at the mercy of the rabble lay.
The tender page with horny fists was galled,
And he was gifted most that loudest bawled;
The Spirit gave the doctoral degree,
And every member of a company
Was of his trade and of the Bible free.
Plain truths enough for needful use they found,
But men would still be itching to expound;
Each was ambitious of th' obscurest place,
No measure ta'en from knowledge, all from grace.
Study and pains were now no more their care;
Texts were explained by fasting and by prayer.
This was the fruit the private spirit brought,
Occasioned by great zeal and little thought.
While crowds unlearned, with rude devotion warm,

About the sacred viands buzz and swarm,
The fly-blown text creates a crawling brood,
And turns to maggots what was meant for food.
A thousand daily sects rise up and die;
A thousand more the perished race supply.
So all we make of Heaven's discovered will
Is not to have it or to use it ill.
The danger's much the same, on several shelves
If others wreck us or we wreck ourselves.
What then remains, but, waiving each extreme,
The tides of ignorance and pride to stem?
Neither so rich a treasure to forego,
Nor proudly seek beyond our pow'r to know?
Faith is not built on disquisitions vain;
The things we must believe are few and plain.
But since men will believe more than they need,
And every man will make himself a creed,
In doubtful questions 't is the safest way
To learn what unsuspected ancients say;
For 't is not likely we should higher soar,
In search of heav'n, than all the Church before,
Nor can we be deceived unless we see
The Scripture and the Fathers disagree.
If after all they stand suspected still
(For no man's faith depends upon his will),
'T is some relief that points not clearly known
Without much hazard may be let alone;
And, after hearing what our Church can say,
If still our reason runs another way,
That private reason 't is more just to curb
Than by disputes the public peace disturb,
For points obscure are of small use to learn,
But common quiet is mankind's concern.
Thus have I made my own opinions clear,
Yet neither praise expect, nor censure fear.
And this unpolished, rugged verse I chose,
As fittest for discourse and nearest prose;
For while from sacred truth I do not swerve,
Tom Sternhold's or Tom Shadwell's rhymes will serve.

1682. 1682.

TO THE PIOUS MEMORY OF THE ACCOMPLISHED YOUNG LADY

MRS. ANNE KILLIGREW

EXCELLENT IN THE TWO SISTER ARTS OF POESY AND PAINTING

AN ODE

I

Thou youngest virgin-daughter of the skies,
Made in the last promotion of the blest,
Whose palms, new plucked from Paradise,
In spreading branches more sublimely rise,
Rich with immortal green above the rest;
Whether, adopted to some neighbouring star,
Thou roll'st above us in thy wand'ring race,
Or, in procession fixed and regular,
Moved with the heaven's majestic pace,
Or, called to more superior bliss,
Thou tread'st, with seraphims, the vast abyss;
Whatever happy region is thy place,
Cease thy celestial song a little space:
Thou wilt have time enough for hymns divine,
Since heav'n's eternal year is thine.
Hear, then, a mortal Muse thy praise rehearse,
In no ignoble verse,
But such as thy own voice did practise here,
When thy first-fruits of poesy were giv'n,
To make thyself a welcome inmate there,
While yet a young probationer
And candidate of heav'n.

II

If by traduction came thy mind,
Our wonder is the less to find
A soul so charming from a stock so good:
Thy father was transfused into thy blood;
So wert thou born into a tuneful strain,
An early, rich, and inexhausted vein.
But if thy pre-existing soul
Was formed at first, with myriads more,
It did through all the mighty poets roll,
Who Greek or Latin laurels wore,

And was that Sappho last which once it was before.
If so, then cease thy flight, O heaven-born mind!
Thou hast no dross to purge from thy rich ore,
Nor can thy soul a fairer mansion find
Than was the beauteous frame she left behind:
Return, to fill or mend the choir of thy celestial kind!

III

May we presume to say that at thy birth
New joy was sprung in heav'n as well as here on earth?
For sure the milder planets did combine
On thy auspicious horoscope to shine,
And ev'n the most malicious were in trine.
Thy brother-angels at thy birth
Strung each his lyre, and tuned it high,
That all the people of the sky
Might know a poetess was born on earth;
And then, if ever, mortal ears
Had heard the music of the spheres.
And if no clust'ring swarm of bees
On thy sweet mouth distilled their golden dew,
'T was that such vulgar miracles
Heav'n had not leisure to renew;
For all the blest fraternity of love
Solemnized there thy birth, and kept thy holiday above.

IV

O gracious God! how far have we
Profaned thy heav'nly gift of poesy!
Made prostitute and profligate the Muse,
Debased to each obscene and impious use,
Whose harmony was first ordained above
For tongues of angels and for hymns of love!
Oh, wretched we! why were we hurried down
This lubric and adult'rate age
(Nay, added fat pollutions of our own),
T' increase the steaming ordures of the stage?
What can we say t' excuse our second fall?
Let this thy vestal, Heaven, atone for all:
Her Arethusian stream remains unsoiled,
Unmixed with foreign filth, and undefiled;
Her wit was more than man, her innocence a child.

V

Art she had none, yet wanted none,
For Nature did that want supply;
So rich in treasures of her own
She might our boasted stores defy:
Such noble vigour did her verse adorn
That it seemed borrowed where 't was only born.
Her morals too were in her bosom bred,
By great examples daily fed,
What in the best of books, her father's life, she read.
And to be read herself she need not fear;
Each test and ev'ry light her Muse will bear,
Though Epictetus with his lamp were there.
Ev'n love (for love sometimes her Muse exprest)
Was but a lambent flame which played about her breast,
Light as the vapours of a morning dream;
So cold herself, whilst she such warmth exprest,
'T was Cupid bathing in Diana's stream.

VI

Born to the spacious empire of the Nine,
One would have thought she should have been content
To manage well that mighty government;
But what can young ambitious souls confine?
To the next realm she stretched her sway,
For Painture near adjoining lay,
A plenteous province and alluring prey:
A Chamber of Dependences was framed
(As conquerors will never want pretence,
When armed to justify th' offence),
And the whole fief in right of Poetry she claimed.
The country open lay without defence,
For poets frequent inroads there had made,
And perfectly could represent
The shape, the face, with ev'ry lineament,
And all the large demains which the dumb Sister swayed;
All bowed beneath her government,
Received in triumph wheresoe'er she went.
Her pencil drew whate'er her soul designed,

And oft the happy draught surpassed the image in her mind:
The sylvan scenes of herds and flocks,
And fruitful plains and barren rocks;
Of shallow brooks that flowed so clear
The bottom did the top appear;
Of deeper too and ampler floods,
Which, as in mirrors, showed the woods;
Of lofty trees, with sacred shades
And perspectives of pleasant glades,
Where nymphs of brightest form appear,
And shaggy satyrs standing near,
Which them at once admire and fear;
The ruins too of some majestic piece,
Boasting the pow'r of ancient Rome or Greece,
Whose statues, friezes, columns, broken lie,
And, though defaced, the wonder of the eye.
What Nature, art, bold fiction, e'er durst frame,
Her forming hand gave feature to the name:
So strange a concourse ne'er was seen before,
But when the peopled ark the whole creation bore.

VII

The scene then changed: with bold erected look
Our martial King the sight with reverence strook,
For, not content t' express his outward part,
Her hand called out the image of his heart;
His warlike mind, his soul devoid of fear,
His high-designing thoughts, were figured there,
As when, by magic, ghosts are made appear.
Our phœnix Queen was portrayed, too, so bright
Beauty alone could beauty take so right:
Her dress, her shape, her matchless grace,
Were all observed, as well as heavenly face;
With such a peerless majesty she stands
As in that day she took the crown from sacred hands;
Before, a train of heroines was seen—
In beauty foremost, as in rank, the queen.
Thus nothing to her genius was denied,
But, like a ball of fire, the farther thrown
Still with a greater blaze she shone,

And her bright soul broke out on ev'ry side.
What next she had designed, Heaven only knows;
To such immod'rate growth her conquest rose
That Fate alone its progress could oppose.

VIII

Now all those charms, that blooming grace,
The well-proportioned shape, and beauteous face,
Shall never more be seen by mortal eyes;
In earth the much-lamented virgin lies.
Not wit nor piety could Fate prevent;
Nor was the cruel Destiny content
To finish all the murder at a blow,
To sweep at once her life and beauty too,
But, like a hardened felon, took a pride
To work more mischievously slow,
And plundered first, and then destroyed.
Oh, double sacrilege on things divine,
To rob the relic and deface the shrine!
But thus Orinda died:
Heaven, by the same disease, did both translate;
As equal were their souls, so equal was their fate.

IX

Meantime her warlike brother on the seas
His waving streamers to the winds displays,
And vows for his return with vain devotion pays.
Ah, generous youth, that wish forbear;
The winds too soon will waft thee here!
Slack all thy sails, and fear to come;
Alas! thou know'st not thou art wrecked at home.
No more shalt thou behold thy sister's face;
Thou hast already had her last embrace.
But look aloft; and if thou ken'st from far,
Among the Pleiads, a new-kindled star,
If any sparkles than the rest more bright,
'T is she that shines in that propitious light.

X

When in mid-air the golden trump shall sound,
To raise the nations under ground;
When in the Valley of Jehosophat

The judging God shall close the book of Fate,
And there the last assizes keep
For those who wake and those who sleep;
When rattling bones together fly
From the four corners of the sky;
When sinews o'er the skeletons are spread,
Those clothed with flesh, and life inspires the dead;
The sacred poets first shall hear the sound,
And foremost from the tomb shall bound,
For they are covered with the lightest ground,
And straight, with inborn vigour, on the wing,
Like mounting larks, to the new morning sing.
There thou, sweet saint, before the quire shalt go,
As harbinger of heaven, the way to show,
The way which thou so well hast learned below.

1685 or 1686. 1686.

THE HIND AND THE PANTHER

FROM

PART I

A milk-white Hind, immortal and unchanged,
Fed on the lawns and in the forest ranged.
Without unspotted, innocent within,
She feared no danger, for she knew no sin:
Yet had she oft been chased with horns and hounds
And Scythian shafts; and many wingèd wounds
Aimed at her heart; was often forced to fly,
And doomed to death, though fated not to die.
Not so her young, for their unequal line
Was hero's make, half human, half divine:
Their earthly mould obnoxious was to fate,
Th' immortal part assumed immortal state.
Of these a slaughtered army lay in blood,
Extended o'er the Caledonian wood,
Their native walk; whose vocal blood arose,
And cried for pardon on their perjured foes.
Their fate was fruitful; and the sanguine seed,
Endued with souls, increased the sacred breed.
So captive Israel multiplied in chains,
A numerous exile, and enjoyed her pains.

With grief and gladness mixed, their mother viewed
Her martyred offspring and their race renewed;
Their corpse to perish, but their kind to last,
So much the deathless plant the dying fruit surpassed.
Panting and pensive now she ranged alone,
And wandered in the kingdoms once her own.
The common hunt, though from their rage restrained
By sov'reign pow'r, her company disdained,
Grinned as they passed, and with a glaring eye
Gave gloomy signs of secret enmity.
'T is true she bounded by, and tripped so light
They had not time to take a steady sight;
For Truth has such a face and such a mien
As to be loved needs only to be seen.
The bloody Bear, an independent beast,
Unlicked to form, in groans her hate expressed.
Among the timorous kind the quaking Hare
Professed neutrality, but would not swear.
Next her the buffoon Ape, as atheists use,
Mimicked all sects, and had his own to choose;
Still when the Lion looked, his knees he bent,
And paid at church a courtier's compliment.
The bristled baptist Boar, impure as he,
But whit'ned with the foam of sanctity,
With fat pollutions filled the sacred place,
And mountains levelled in his furious race;
So first rebellion founded was in grace.
But since the mighty ravage which he made
In German forests had his guilt betrayed,
With broken tusks and with a borrowed name
He shunned the vengeance and concealed the shame,
So lurked in sects unseen. With greater guile
False Reynard fed on consecrated spoil:
The graceless beast by Athanasius first
Was chased from Nice, then by Socinus nursed;
His impious race their blasphemy renewed,
And Nature's King through Nature's optics viewed;
Reversed they viewed Him lessened to their eye,
Nor in an infant could a God descry.
New swarming sects to this obliquely tend;
Hence they began, and here they all will end.

What weight of ancient witness can prevail,
If private reason hold the public scale?
But, gracious God, how well dost Thou provide
For erring judgments an unerring guide!
Thy throne is darkness in th' abyss of light,
A blaze of glory that forbids the sight.
O teach me to believe Thee thus concealed,
And search no farther than Thyself revealed;
But her alone for my director take
Whom Thou hast promised never to forsake!
My thoughtless youth was winged with vain desires;
My manhood, long misled by wand'ring fires,
Followed false lights; and when their glimpse was gone,
My pride struck out new sparkles of her own.
Such was I, such by nature still I am;
Be Thine the glory, and be mine the shame.
Good life be now my task: my doubts are done;
What more could fright my faith than Three in One?
Can I believe Eternal God could lie
Disguised in mortal mould and infancy,
That the great Maker of the world could die,
And after that trust my imperfect sense
Which calls in question His omnipotence?
Can I my reason to my faith compel,
And shall my sight and touch and taste rebel?
Superior faculties are set aside;
Shall their subservient organs be my guide?
Then let the moon usurp the rule of day,
And winking tapers show the sun his way;
For what my senses can themselves perceive
I need no revelation to believe.
Can they who say the Host should be descried
By sense, define a body glorified,
Impassable, and penetrating parts?
Let them declare by what mysterious arts
He shot that body through th' opposing might
Of bolts and bars impervious to the light,
And stood before His train confessed in open sight;
For since thus wondrously He passed, 't is plain
One single place two bodies did contain,
And sure the same Omnipotence as well

Can make one body in more places dwell.
Let Reason then at her own quarry fly,
But how can finite grasp Infinity?

. . . . . .

Too boastful Britain, please thyself no more
That beasts of prey are banished from thy shore;
The Bear, the Boar, and every salvage name,
Wild in effect, though in appearance tame,
Lay waste thy woods, destroy thy blissful bow'r,
And, muzzled though they seem, the mutes devour.
More haughty than the rest, the wolfish race
Appear with belly gaunt and famished face;
Never was so deformed a beast of grace.
His ragged tail betwixt his legs he wears,
Close clapped for shame; but his rough crest he rears,
And pricks up his predestinating ears.
His wild disordered walk, his haggard eyes,
Did all the bestial citizens surprise:
Though feared and hated, yet he ruled awhile,
As captain or companion of the spoil.

. . . . . .

The Panther, sure the noblest next the Hind,
And fairest creature of the spotted kind,
Oh, could her in-born stains be washed away,
She were too good to be beast of prey!
How can I praise or blame and not offend,
Or how divide the frailty from the friend?
Her faults and virtues lie so mixed that she
Nor wholly stands condemned nor wholly free.
Then, like her injured Lion, let me speak;
He cannot bend her, and he would not break.
Unkind already, and estranged in part,
The Wolf begins to share her wand'ring heart;
Though unpolluted yet with actual ill,
She half commits who sins but in her will.
If, as our dreaming Platonists report,
There could be spirits of a middle sort,
Too black for heav'n and yet too white for hell,
Who just dropped half-way down, nor lower fell,
So poised, so gently she descends from high,
It seems a soft dismission from the sky.

Her house not ancient, whatsoe'er pretence
Her clergy heralds make in her defence;
A second century not half-way run,
Since the new honours of her blood begun.

1686. 1687.

FROM

PART II

"Before the Word was written," said the Hind,
"Our Saviour preached His faith to human kind;
From His Apostles the first age received
Eternal truth, and what they taught believed.
Thus by tradition faith was planted first;
Succeeding flocks succeeding pastors nursed.
This was the way our wise Redeemer chose,
Who sure could all things for the best dispose,
To fence His fold from their encroaching foes.
He could have writ Himself, but well foresaw
Th' event would be like that of Moses' law;
Some difference would arise, some doubts remain,
Like those which yet the jarring Jews maintain.
No written laws can be so plain, so pure,
But wit may gloss and malice may obscure—
Not those indited by His first command;
A prophet graved the text, an angel held his hand.
Thus faith was ere the written Word appeared,
And men believed, not what they read, but heard.
But since th' Apostles could not be confined
To these or those, but severally designed
Their large commission round the world to blow,
To spread their faith they spread their labours too.
Yet still their absent flock their pains did share;
They hearkened still, for love produces care.
And as mistakes arose or discords fell,
Or bold seducers taught 'em to rebel,
As charity grew cold or faction hot,
Or long neglect their lessons had forgot,
For all their wants they wisely did provide,
And preaching by epistles was supplied:
So great physicians cannot all attend,

But some they visit and to some they send.
Yet all those letters were not writ to all;
Nor first intended but occasional,
Their absent sermons; nor, if they contain
All needful doctrines, are those doctrines plain:
Clearness by frequent preaching must be wrought;
They writ but seldom, but they daily taught;
And what one saint has said of holy Paul,
'He darkly writ,' is true applied to all.
For this obscurity could Heav'n provide
More prudently than by a living guide,
As doubts arose the difference to decide?
A guide was therefore needful, therefore made;
And, if appointed, sure to be obeyed.
Thus, with due rev'rence to th' Apostles' writ,
By which my sons are taught, to which submit,
I think those truths their sacred works contain
The Church alone can certainly explain,
That following ages, leaning on the past,
May rest upon the primitive at last.
Nor would I thence the Word no rule infer,
But none without the Church-interpreter;
Because, as I have urged before, 't is mute,
And is itself the subject of dispute.
But what th' Apostles their successors taught,
They to the next, from them to us is brought—
Th' undoubted sense which is in Scripture sought.
From hence the Church is armed, when errors rise,
To stop their entrance and prevent surprise;
And, safe entrenched within, her foes without defies.
By these, all fest'ring sores her Councils heal,
Which time or has disclosed or shall reveal;
For discord cannot end without a last appeal.
Nor can a Council national decide
But with subordination to her guide
(I wish the cause were on that issue tried);
Much less the Scripture:—for suppose debate
Betwixt pretenders to a fair estate,
Bequeathed by some legator's last intent
(Such is our dying Saviour's Testament);
The will is proved, is opened, and is read;

The doubtful heirs their diff'ring titles plead;
All vouch the words their int'rest to maintain,
And each pretends by those his cause is plain:
Shall then the testament award the right?
No, that's the Hungary for which they fight,
The field of battle, subject of debate,
The thing contended for, the fair estate.
The sense is intricate; 't is only clear
What vowels and what consonants are there;
Therefore 't is plain its meaning must be tried
Before some judge appointed to decide."
"Suppose," the fair apostate said, "I grant
The faithful flock some living guide should want,
Your arguments an endless chase pursue:
Produce this vaunted leader to our view,
This mighty Moses of the chosen crew."
The dame, who saw her fainting foe retired,
With force renewed, to victory aspired;
And, looking upward to her kindred sky,
As once our Saviour owned His Deity,
Pronounced His words—"She whom ye seek am I."

1686. 1687.

NO, NO, POOR SUFF'RING HEART

No, no, poor suff'ring heart, no change endeavour;
Choose to sustain the smart, rather than leave her:
My ravished eyes behold such charms about her,
I can die with her but not live without her;
One tender sigh of hers to see me languish,
Will more than pay the price of my past anguish.
Beware, O cruel fair, how you smile on me;
'T was a kind look of yours that has undone me.

Love has in store for me one happy minute,
And she will end my pain who did begin it:
Then no day void of bliss or pleasure leaving,
Ages shall slide away without perceiving;
Cupid shall guard the door, the more to please us,
And keep out Time and Death, when they would seize us;
Time and Death shall depart, and say in flying,
Love has found out a way to live by dying.

1692.

TO MY DEAR FRIEND, MR. CONGREVE

ON HIS COMEDY CALLED "THE DOUBLE DEALER"

Well, then, the promised hour is come at last;
The present age of wit obscures the past.
Strong were our sires; and as they fought they writ,
Conqu'ring with force of arms and dint of wit:
Theirs was the giant race before the Flood;
And thus, when Charles returned, our empire stood.
Like Janus, he the stubborn soil manured,
With rules of husbandry the rankness cured;
Tamed us to manners, when the stage was rude,
And boisterous English wit with art endued.
Our age was cultivated thus, at length,
But what we gained in skill we lost in strength.
Our builders were with want of genius curst;
The second temple was not like the first:
Till you, the best Vitruvius, come at length,
Our beauties equal, but excel our strength.
Firm Doric pillars found your solid base,
The fair Corinthian crowns the higher space:
Thus all below is strength, and all above is grace.
In easy dialogue is Fletcher's praise;
He moved the mind, but had not power to raise.
Great Jonson did by strength of judgment please;
Yet, doubling Fletcher's force, he wants his ease.
In differing talents both adorned their age,
One for the study, t' other for the stage.
But both to Congreve justly shall submit,
One matched in judgment, both o'ermatched in wit.
In him all beauties of this age we see:
Etherege his courtship, Southerne's purity,
The satire, wit, and strength of manly Wycherley.
All this in blooming youth you have achieved;
Nor are your foiled contemporaries grieved:
So much the sweetness of your manners move,
We cannot envy you, because we love.
Fabius might joy in Scipio, when he saw
A beardless Consul made against the law,
And join his suffrage to the votes of Rome,
Though he with Hannibal was overcome.

Thus old Romano bowed to Raphael's fame,
And scholar to the youth he taught became.
O that your brows my laurel had sustained!
Well had I been deposed, if you had reigned:
The father had descended for the son,
For only you are lineal to the throne.
Thus when the state one Edward did depose,
A greater Edward in his room arose.
But now, not I, but poetry, is curst,
For Tom the second reigns like Tom the first.
But let 'em not mistake my patron's part,
Nor call his charity their own desart.
Yet this I prophesy: thou shalt be seen,
Though with some short parenthesis between,
High on the throne of wit, and, seated there,
Not mine—that's little—but thy laurel wear.
Thy first attempt an early promise made;
That early promise this has more than paid.
So bold, yet so judiciously you dare,
That your least praise is to be regular:
Time, place, and action may with pains be wrought;
But genius must be born, and never can be taught.
This is your portion, this your native store:
Heav'n, that but once was prodigal before,
To Shakespeare gave as much; she could not give him more.
Maintain your post; that's all the fame you need,
For 't is impossible you should proceed.
Already I am worn with cares and age,
And just abandoning th' ungrateful stage;
Unprofitably kept at Heav'n's expense,
I live a rent-charge on His providence.
But you, whom ev'ry Muse and Grace adorn,
Whom I foresee to better fortune born,
Be kind to my remains; and oh, defend,
Against your judgment, your departed friend!
Let not the insulting foe my fame pursue,
But shade those laurels which descend to you;
And take for tribute what these lines express—
You merit more, nor could my love do less.

1693.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST; OR, THE POWER OF MUSIC

A SONG IN HONOUR OF ST. CECILIA'S DAY, 1697

I

'T was at the royal feast for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son:
Aloft, in awful state,
The godlike hero sate
On his imperial throne;
His valiant peers were placed around,
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound
(So should desert in arms be crowned);
The lovely Thais, by his side,
Sate like a blooming Eastern bride,
In flow'r of youth and beauty's pride.
Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

CHORUS

Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

II

Timotheus, placed on high
Amid the tuneful quire,
With flying fingers touched the lyre;
The trembling notes ascend the sky,
And heav'nly joys inspire.
The song began from Jove,
Who left his blissful seats above
(Such is the pow'r of mighty love):
A dragon's fiery form belied the god;
Sublime on radiant spires he rode,
When he to fair Olympia pressed,
And while he sought her snowy breast;
Then round her slender waist he curled,

And stamped an image of himself, a sov'reign of the world.
The list'ning crowd admire the lofty sound:
"A present deity!" they shout around:
"A present deity!" the vaulted roofs rebound.
With ravished ears
The monarch hears;
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

CHORUS

With ravished ears
The monarch hears;
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

III

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung,
Of Bacchus ever fair and ever young.
The jolly god in triumph comes:
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums!
Flushed with a purple grace,
He shows his honest face:
Now give the hautboys breath! he comes, he comes!
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain:
Bacchus' blessings are a treasure;
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

CHORUS

Bacchus' blessings are a treasure;
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

IV

Soothed with the sound, the king grew vain,
Fought all his battles o'er again,
And thrice he routed all his foes and thrice he slew the slain.
The master saw the madness rise,
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
And while he heaven and earth defied,
Changed his hand and checked his pride.
He chose a mournful Muse,
Soft pity to infuse:
He sung Darius great and good,
By too severe a fate
Fallen, fallen, fallen fallen,
Fallen from his high estate,
And welt'ring in his blood;
Deserted at his utmost need
By those his former bounty fed,
On the bare earth exposed he lies,
With not a friend to close his eyes.
With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below;
And now and then a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

CHORUS

Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below;
And now and then a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

V

The mighty master smiled to see
That love was in the next degree;
'T was but a kindred sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.
Softly sweet, in Lydian measures,
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.
"War," he sung, "is toil and trouble,

Honour but an empty bubble,
Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying.
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, O think it worth enjoying:
Lovely Thais sits beside thee;
Take the good the gods provide thee."
The many rend the skies with loud applause;
So Love was crowned, but Music won the cause.
The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again:
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

CHORUS

The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again:
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

VI

Now strike the golden lyre again,
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain:
Break his bands of sleep asunder,
And rouse him, like a rattling peal of thunder!
Hark, hark! the horrid sound
Has raised up his head;
As awaked from the dead,
And amazed, he stares around.
"Revenge! revenge!" Timotheus cries.
"See the Furies arise!
See the snakes that they rear,
How they hiss in their hair,
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!

Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand!
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain,
And unburied remain
Inglorious on the plain:
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew!
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes,
And glitt'ring temples of their hostile gods!"
The princes applaud with a furious joy,
And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.

CHORUS

And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.

VII

Thus, long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
While organs yet were mute,
Timotheus, to his breathing flute
And sounding lyre,
Could swell the soul to rage or kindle soft desire.
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame:
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With Nature's mother-wit and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown:
He raised a mortal to the skies,
She drew an angel down.

GRAND CHORUS

At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame:
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With Nature's mother-wit and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown:
He raised a mortal to the skies,
She drew an angel down.

1697. 1697.

FROM

PALAMON AND ARCITE

Arcite returned, and, as in honour tied,
His foe with bedding and with food supplied;
Then, ere the day, two suits of armour sought,
Which borne before him on his steed he brought;
Both were of shining steel, and wrought so pure
As might the strokes of two such arms endure.
Now, at the time and in th' appointed place,
The challenger and challenged, face to face,
Approach; each other from afar they knew,
And from afar their hatred changed their hue.
So stands the Thracian herdsman with his spear,
Full in the gap, and hopes the hunted bear,
And hears him rustling in the wood, and sees
His course at distance by the bending trees,
And thinks, "Here comes my mortal enemy,
And either he must fall in fight or I";
This while he thinks, he lifts aloft his dart;
A gen'rous chillness seizes ev'ry part—
The veins pour back the blood, and fortify the heart.
Thus pale they meet; their eyes with fury burn;
None greets, for none the greeting will return,
But in dumb surliness each armed with care
His foe professed, as brother of the war.
Then both, no moment lost, at once advance
Against each other, armed with sword and lance;

They lash, they foin, they pass, they strive to bore
Their corslets, and the thinnest parts explore.
Thus two long hours in equal arms they stood,
And, wounded, wound, till both were bathed in blood;
And not a foot of ground had either got,
As if the world depended on the spot.
Fell Arcite, like an angry tiger fared,
And like a lion Palamon appeared:
Or as two boars, whom love to battle draws,
With rising bristles and with frothy jaws,
Their adverse breasts with tusks oblique they wound;
With grunts and groans the forest rings around.
So fought the knights, and, fighting, must abide
Till fate an umpire sends their diff'rence to decide.
The pow'r that ministers to God's decrees,
And executes on earth what Heav'n foresees,
Called Providence, or Chance, or Fatal Sway,
Comes with resistless force, and finds or makes her way;
Nor kings, nor nations, nor united pow'r
One moment can retard th' appointed hour;
And some one day some wondrous chance appears,
Which happened not in centuries of years:
For sure, whate'er we mortals hate or love,
Or hope or fear, depends on pow'rs above;
They move our appetites to good or ill,
And by foresight necessitate the will.
In Theseus this appears, whose youthful joy
Was beasts of chase in forests to destroy:
This gentle knight, inspired by jolly May,
Forsook his easy couch at early day,
And to the wood and wilds pursued his way.
Beside him rode Hippolyta the queen,
And Emily attired in lively green,
With horns and hounds and all the tuneful cry,
To hunt a royal hart within the covert nigh;
And as he followed Mars before, so now
He serves the goddess of the silver bow.
The way that Theseus took was to the wood
Where the two knights in cruel battle stood;
The laund on which they fought, th' appointed place
In which th' uncoupled hounds began the chase.

Thither forth-right he rode to rouse the prey,
That shaded by the fern in harbour lay,
And, thence dislodged, was wont to leave the wood
For open fields, and cross the crystal flood.
Approached, and looking underneath the sun,
He saw proud Arcite and fierce Palamon,
In mortal battle doubling blow on blow:
Like lightning flamed their falchions to and fro,
And shot a dreadful gleam; so strong they strook
There seemed less force required to fell an oak.
He gazed with wonder on their equal might,
Looked eager on, but knew not either knight:
Resolved to learn, he spurred his fiery steed
With goring rowels to provoke his speed;
The minute ended that began the race,
So soon he was betwixt 'em on the place,
And, with his sword unsheathed, on pain of life
Commands both combatants to cease their strife.

1698–99. 1700.

FROM

TRANSLATIONS FROM HOMER

Now when twelve days complete had run their race,
The gods bethought them of the cares belonging to their place.
Jove at their head ascending from the sea,
A shoal of puny pow'rs attend his way.
Then Thetis, not unmindful of her son,
Emerging from the deep, to beg her boon,
Pursued their track, and, wakened from his rest,
Before the sovereign stood, a morning guest.
Him in the circle, but apart, she found;
The rest at awful distance stood around.
She bowed; and ere she durst her suit begin,
One hand embraced his knees, one propped his chin.
Then thus: "If I, celestial sire, in aught
Have served thy will or gratified thy thought,
One glimpse of glory to my issue give,
Graced for the little time he has to live.
Dishonoured by the king of men he stands;

His rightful prize is ravished from his hands.
But thou, O father, in my son's defence
Assume thy pow'r, assert thy providence!
Let Troy prevail, till Greece th' affront has paid
With doubled honours, and redeemed his aid.

1698–99. 1700.

HUNTING SONG

DIANA

With horns and hounds I waken the day,
And hie to the woodland-walks away;
I tuck up my robe, and am buskined soon,
And tie to my forehead a wexing moon.
I course the fleet stag, and unkennel the fox,
And chase the wild goats o'er the summits of rocks;
With shouting and hooting we pierce through the sky,
And Echo turns hunter and doubles the cry.

CHORUS

With shouting and hooting we pierce through the sky,
And Echo turns hunter and doubles the cry.

1700. 1700.

ANNE, COUNTESS OF WINCHILSEA

THE TREE

Fair tree, for thy delightful shade
'T is just that some return be made;
Sure some return is due from me
To thy cool shadows and to thee.
When thou to birds dost shelter give
Thou music dost from them receive;
If travellers beneath thee stay
Till storms have worn themselves away,
That time in praising thee they spend,
And thy protecting power commend;
The shepherd here, from scorching freed,
Tunes to thy dancing leaves his reed,

Whilst his loved nymph in thanks bestows
Her flow'ry chaplets on thy boughs.
Shall I then only silent be,
And no return be made by me?
No! let this wish upon thee wait,
And still to flourish be thy fate;
To future ages mayst thou stand
Untouched by the rash workman's hand,
Till that large stock of sap is spent
Which gives thy summer's ornament;
Till the fierce winds, that vainly strive
To shock thy greatness whilst alive,
Shall on thy lifeless hour attend,
Prevent the axe, and grace thy end,
Their scattered strength together call
And to the clouds proclaim thy fall;
Who then their ev'ning dews may spare,
When thou no longer art their care,
But shalt, like ancient heroes, burn,
And some bright hearth be made thy urn.

1689? 1903.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE

Exert thy voice, sweet harbinger of Spring!
This moment is thy time to sing,
This moment I attend to praise,
And set my numbers to thy lays.
Free as thine shall be my song;
As thy music, short or long.
Poets wild as thee were born,
Pleasing best when unconfined,
When to please is least designed,
Soothing but their cares to rest:
Cares do still their thoughts molest,
And still th' unhappy poet's breast,
Like thine, when best he sings, is placed against a thorn.
She begins, let all be still!
Muse, thy promise now fulfil!
Sweet, oh sweet! still sweeter yet!
Can thy words such accents fit?

Canst thou syllables refine,
Melt a sense that shall retain
Still some spirit of the brain,
Till with sounds like these it join?
'T will not be! then change thy note;
Let division shake thy throat:
Hark! division now she tries,
Yet as far the Muse outflies.
Cease then, prithee, cease thy tune!
Trifler, wilt thou sing till June?
Till thy business all lies waste,
And the time of building's past?
Thus we poets that have speech
Unlike what thy forests teach,
If a fluent vein be shown
That's transcendent to our own,
Criticise, reform, or preach,
Or censure what we cannot reach.

1713.

A NOCTURNAL REVERIE

In such a night, when ev'ry louder wind
Is to its distant cavern safe confined,
And only gentle Zephyr fans his wings,
And lonely Philomel, still waking, sings,
Or from some tree, famed for the owl's delight,
She, hollowing clear, directs the wand'rer right:
In such a night, when passing clouds give place,
Or thinly vail the heav'ns' mysterious face;
When in some river, overhung with green,
The waving moon and trembling leaves are seen;
When freshened grass now bears itself upright,
And makes cool banks to pleasing rest invite,
Whence springs the woodbind and the bramble-rose,
And where the sleepy cowslip sheltered grows;
Whilst now a paler hue the foxglove takes,
Yet chequers still with red the dusky brakes;
When scattered glow-worms, but in twilight fine,
Show trivial beauties watch their hour to shine,
Whilst Salisb'ry stands the test of every light,

In perfect charms and perfect virtue bright;
When odours which declined repelling day
Through temp'rate air uninterrupted stray;
When darkened groves their softest shadows wear,
And falling waters we distinctly hear;
When through the gloom more venerable shows
Some ancient fabric, awful in repose;
While sunburnt hills their swarthy looks conceal,
And swelling haycocks thicken up the vale;
When the loosed horse now, as his pasture leads,
Comes slowly grazing through th' adjoining meads,
Whose stealing pace and lengthened shade we fear,
Till torn up forage in his teeth we hear;
When nibbling sheep at large pursue their food,
And unmolested kine re-chew the cud;
When curlews cry beneath the village-walls,
And to her straggling brood the partridge calls;
Their short-lived jubilee the creatures keep,
Which but endures whilst tyrant-man does sleep;
When a sedate content the spirit feels,
And no fierce light disturb whilst it reveals,
But silent musings urge the mind to seek
Something too high for syllables to speak,
Till the free soul, to a compos'dness charmed,
Finding the elements of rage disarmed,
O'er all below a solemn quiet grown,
Joys in th' inferior world and thinks it like her own:
In such a night let me abroad remain,
Till morning breaks and all's confused again;
Our cares, our toils, our clamours, are renewed,
Or pleasures, seldom reached, again pursued.

1713.

JOSEPH ADDISON

FROM

AN ACCOUNT OF THE GREATEST ENGLISH POETS

Long had our dull forefathers slept supine,
Nor felt the raptures of the tuneful Nine;
Till Chaucer first, a merry bard, arose,

And many a story told in rhyme and prose.
But age has rusted what the poet writ,
Worn out his language, and obscured his wit;
In vain he jests in his unpolished strain,
And tries to make his readers laugh, in vain.
Old Spenser next, warmed with poetic rage,
In ancient tales amused a barb'rous age;
An age that, yet uncultivate and rude,
Where'er the poet's fancy led, pursued
Through pathless fields and unfrequented floods,
To dens of dragons and enchanted woods.
But now the mystic tale, that pleased of yore,
Can charm an understanding age no more;
The long-spun allegories fulsome grow,
While the dull moral lies too plain below.
We view well-pleased at distance all the sights
Of arms and palfreys, battles, fields, and fights,
And damsels in distress, and courteous knights;
But when we look too near, the shades decay,
And all the pleasing landscape fades away.
Great Cowley then, a mighty genius, wrote,
O'er-run with wit, and lavish of his thought:
His turns too closely on the reader press;
He more had pleased us, had he pleased us less.
. . . . . .
But Milton next, with high and haughty stalks,
Unfettered in majestic numbers walks;
No vulgar hero can his Muse engage,
Nor earth's wide scene confine his hallowed rage.
See, see! he upward springs, and tow'ring high
Spurns the dull province of mortality;
Shakes heav'n's eternal throne with dire alarms,
And sets th' Almighty Thunderer in arms.
Whate'er his pen describes I more than see,
Whilst ev'ry verse, arrayed in majesty,
Bold and sublime, my whole attention draws,
And seems above the critic's nicer laws.
How are you struck with terror and delight
When angel with arch-angel copes in fight!
When great Messiah's outspread banner shines,
How does the chariot rattle in his lines!

What sounds of brazen wheels, what thunder, scare
And stun the reader with the din of war!
With fear my spirits and my blood retire,
To see the seraphs sunk in clouds of fire;
But when, with eager steps, from hence I rise,
And view the first gay scenes of Paradise,
What tongue, what words of rapture, can express
A vision so profuse of pleasantness?

. . . . . .

But now, my Muse, a softer strain rehearse;
Turn ev'ry line with art, and smooth thy verse:
The courtly Waller next commands thy lays;
Muse, tune thy verse with art to Waller's praise.
While tender airs and lovely dames inspire
Soft, melting thoughts, and propagate desire,
So long shall Waller's strains our passion move,
And Sacharissa's beauties kindle love.

1694. 1694.

FROM

THE CAMPAIGN

Behold in awful march and dread array
The long-extended squadrons shape their way!
Death, in approaching terrible, imparts
An anxious horrour to the bravest hearts;
Yet do their beating breasts demand the strife,
And thirst of glory quells the love of life.
No vulgar fears can British minds control:
Heat of revenge and noble pride of soul
O'erlook the foe, advantaged by his post,
Lessen his numbers, and contract his host;
Though fens and floods possessed the middle space,
That unprovoked they would have feared to pass,
Nor fens nor floods can stop Britannia's bands
When her proud foe ranged on their borders stands.
But, O my Muse, what numbers wilt thou find
To sing the furious troops in battle joined!
Methinks I hear the drum's tumultuous sound
The victor's shouts and dying groans confound,
The dreadful burst of cannon rend the skies,

And all the thunder of the battle rise!
'T was then great Marlbro's mighty soul was proved,
That, in the shock of charging hosts unmoved,
Amidst confusion, horrour, and despair,
Examined all the dreadful scenes of war:
In peaceful thought the field of death surveyed,
To fainting squadrons sent the timely aid,
Inspired repulsed battalions to engage,
And taught the doubtful battle where to rage.
So when an angel by divine command
With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,
Such as of late o'er pale Britannia passed,
Calm and serene he drives the furious blast,
And, pleased th' Almighty's orders to perform,
Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm.

1704. 1704.

MATTHEW PRIOR

TO A CHILD OF QUALITY FIVE YEARS OLD

THE AUTHOR THEN FORTY

Lords, knights, and squires, the num'rous band
That wear the fair Miss Mary's fetters,
Were summoned, by her high command,
To show their passions by their letters.

My pen amongst the rest I took,
Lest those bright eyes that cannot read
Should dart their kindling fires, and look
The power they have to be obeyed.

Nor quality nor reputation
Forbid me yet my flame to tell;
Dear five years old befriends my passion,
And I may write till she can spell.

For while she makes her silk-worms beds
With all the tender things I swear,
Whilst all the house my passion reads
In papers round her baby's hair,

She may receive and own my flame;
For though the strictest prudes should know it,
She 'll pass for a most virtuous dame,
And I for an unhappy poet.

Then, too, alas! when she shall tear
The lines some younger rival sends,
She 'll give me leave to write, I fear,
And we shall still continue friends;

For, as our diff'rent ages move,
'T is so ordained (would Fate but mend it!)
That I shall be past making love
When she begins to comprehend it.

1704. 1704.

TO A LADY

SHE REFUSING TO CONTINUE A DISPUTE WITH ME AND LEAVING ME IN THE ARGUMENT

Spare, gen'rous victor, spare the slave
Who did unequal war pursue,
That more than triumph he might have
In being overcome by you.

In the dispute whate'er I said,
My heart was by my tongue belied,
And in my looks you might have read
How much I argued on your side.

You, far from danger as from fear,
Might have sustained an open fight:
For seldom your opinions err;
Your eyes are always in the right.

Why, fair one, would you not rely
On Reason's force with Beauty's joined?
Could I their prevalence deny,
I must at once be deaf and blind.

Alas! not hoping to subdue,
I only to the fight aspired;
To keep the beauteous foe in view
Was all the glory I desired.

But she, howe'er of vict'ry sure,
  Contemns the wreath too long delayed,
And, armed with more immediate pow'r,
  Calls cruel silence to her aid.

Deeper to wound, she shuns the fight;
  She drops her arms, to gain the field;
Secures her conquest by her flight,
  And triumphs when she seems to yield.

So when the Parthian turned his steed
  And from the hostile camp withdrew,
With cruel skill the backward reed
  He sent, and as he fled he slew.

1704.

A SIMILE

Dear Thomas, didst thou never pop
Thy head into a tin-man's shop?
There, Thomas, didst thou never see
('T is but by way of simile)
A squirrel spend his little rage
In jumping round a rolling cage,
The cage, as either side turned up,
Striking a ring of bells a-top?
Moved in the orb, pleased with the chimes,
The foolish creature thinks he climbs;
But here or there, turn wood or wire,
He never gets two inches higher.
So fares it with those merry blades
That frisk it under Pindus' shades:
In noble songs and lofty odes,
They tread on stars and talk with gods;
Still dancing in an airy round,
Still pleased with their own verses' sound;
Brought back, how fast soe'er they go,
Always aspiring, always low.

1707.

AN ODE

The merchant, to secure his treasure,
Conveys it in a borrowed name:
Euphelia serves to grace my measure,
But Chloe is my real flame.

My softest verse, my darling lyre,
Upon Euphelia's toilet lay,
When Chloe noted her desire
That I should sing, that I should play.

My lyre I tune, my voice I raise,
But with my numbers mix my sighs;
And whilst I sing Euphelia's praise,
I fix my soul on Chloe's eyes.

Fair Chloe blushed; Euphelia frowned;
I sung and gazed, I played and trembled;
And Venus to the Loves around
Remarked how ill we all dissembled.

1718.

A BETTER ANSWER

Dear Chloe, how blubbered is that pretty face!
Thy cheek all on fire, and thy hair all uncurled!
Prithee quit this caprice, and (as old Falstaff says)
Let us e'en talk a little like folks of this world.

How canst thou presume thou hast leave to destroy
The beauties which Venus but lent to thy keeping?
Those looks were designed to inspire love and joy;
More ord'nary eyes may serve people for weeping.

To be vexed at a trifle or two that I writ,
Your judgment at once and my passion you wrong;
You take that for fact which will scarce be found wit:
Od's life! must one swear to the truth of a song?

What I speak, my fair Chloe, and what I write, shows
The diff'rence there is betwixt nature and art:
I court others in verse, but I love thee in prose;
And they have my whimsies, but thou hast my heart.

The god of us verse-men (you know, child), the sun,
How after his journeys he sets up his rest;
If at morning o'er earth 't is his fancy to run,
At night he reclines on his Thetis's breast.

So when I am wearied with wand'ring all day,
To thee, my delight, in the evening I come:
No matter what beauties I saw in my way;
They were but my visits, but thou art my home.

Then finish, dear Chloe, this pastoral war,
And let us like Horace and Lydia agree;
For thou art a girl as much brighter than her
As he was a poet sublimer than me.

1718.

JONATHAN SWIFT

A DESCRIPTION OF THE MORNING

Now hardly here and there a hackney-coach,
Appearing, showed the ruddy Morn's approach. . . . .
The slipshod 'prentice from his master's door
Had pared the dirt, and sprinkled round the floor.
Now Moll had whirled her mop with dext'rous airs,
Prepared to scrub the entry and the stairs.
The youth with broomy stumps began to trace
The kennel edge, where wheels had worn the place.
The small-coal man was heard with cadence deep,
Till drowned in shriller notes of chimney-sweep.
Duns at his lordship's gate began to meet,
And brick-dust Moll had screamed through half a street.
The turnkey now his flock returning sees,
Duly let out a-nights to steal for fees.
The watchful bailiffs take their silent stands,
And school-boys lag with satchels in their hands.

1709. 1709.

STELLA'S BIRTHDAY, MARCH 13, 1727

This day, whate'er the Fates decree,
Shall still be kept with joy by me.
This day, then, let us not be told
That you are sick, and I grown old;
Nor think on our approaching ills,
And talk of spectacles and pills.
To-morrow will be time enough
To hear such mortifying stuff.
Yet, since from reason may be brought
A better and more pleasing thought,
Which can in spite of all decays
Support a few remaining days,
From not the gravest of divines
Accept for once some serious lines.
Although we now can form no more
Long schemes of life, as heretofore,
Yet you, while time is running fast,
Can look with joy on what is past.
Were future happiness and pain
A mere contrivance of the brain,—
As atheists argue, to entice
And fit their proselytes for vice
(The only comfort they propose,
To have companions in their woes),—
Grant this the case, yet sure 't is hard
That virtue, styled its own reward,
And by all sages understood
To be the chief of human good,
Should acting die, nor leave behind
Some lasting pleasure in the mind,
Which, by remembrance, will assuage
Grief, sickness, poverty, and age,
And strongly shoot a radiant dart
To shine through life's declining part.
Say, Stella, feel you no content,
Reflecting on a life well spent?—
Your skilful hand employed to save
Despairing wretches from the grave,
And then supporting with your store
Those whom you dragged from death before:

So Providence on mortals waits,
Preserving what it first creates.
Your gen'rous boldness to defend
An innocent and absent friend;
That courage which can make you just
To merit humbled in the dust;
The detestation you express
For vice in all its glitt'ring dress;
That patience under tort'ring pain,
Where stubborn Stoics would complain;
Must these like empty shadows pass,
Or forms reflected from a glass,
Or mere chimæras in the mind,
That fly and leave no marks behind?
Does not the body thrive and grow
By food of twenty years ago?
And had it not been still supplied,
It must a thousand times have died;
Then who with reason can maintain
That no effects of food remain?
And is not virtue in mankind
The nutriment that feeds the mind,
Upheld by each good action past,
And still continued by the last?
Then who with reason can pretend
That all effects of virtue end?
Believe me, Stella, when you show
That true contempt for things below,
Nor prize your life for other ends
Than merely to oblige your friends,
Your former actions claim their part,
And join to fortify your heart:
For Virtue in her daily race,
Like Janus, bears a double face;
Looks back with joy where she has gone,
And therefore goes with courage on.
She at your sickly couch will wait,
And guide you to a better state.
O then, whatever Heaven intends,
Take pity on your pitying friends!
Nor let your ills affect your mind

To fancy they can be unkind.
Me, surely me, you ought to spare,
Who gladly would your suff'rings share,
Or give my scrap of life to you,
And think it far beneath your due;
You, to whose care so oft I owe
That I 'm alive to tell you so.

1727.

FROM

VERSES ON THE DEATH OF DR. SWIFT

Before the passing bell begun,
The news through half the town is run.
"O, may we all for death prepare!
What has he left? and who 's his heir?"
"I know no more than what the news is;
'T is all bequeathed to public uses."
"To public uses! there 's a whim!
What had the public done for him?
Mere envy, avarice, and pride:
He gave it all—but first he died.
And had the Dean, in all the nation,
No worthy friend, no poor relation?
So ready to do strangers good,
Forgetting his own flesh and blood!"

. . . . . .

Here shift the scene, to represent
How those I love my death lament.
Poor Pope would grieve a month, and Gay
A week, and Arbuthnot a day.
St. John himself will scarce forbear
To bite his pen and drop a tear.
The rest will give a shrug, and cry,
"I 'm sorry—but we all must die!"
Indifference, clad in Wisdom's guise,
All fortitude of mind supplies;
For how can stony bowels melt
In those who never pity felt?
When we are lashed, they kiss the rod,
Resigning to the will of God.

The fools, my juniors by a year,
Are tortured with suspense and fear;
Who wisely thought my age a screen,
When death approached, to stand between:
The screen removed, their hearts are trembling;
They mourn for me without dissembling.
My female friends, whose tender hearts
Have better learned to act their parts,
Receive the news in doleful dumps:
"The Dean is dead (pray, what is trumps?)."
"Then Lord have mercy on his soul!
(Ladies, I'll venture for the vole.)"
"Six deans, they say, must bear the pall
(I wish I knew what king to call)."
"Madam, your husband will attend
The funeral of so good a friend?"
"No, madam, 't is a shocking sight,
And he's engaged to-morrow night:
My lady Club will take it ill
If he should fail her at quadrille.
He loved the Dean (I lead a heart),
But dearest friends, they say, must part.
His time was come; he ran his race;
We hope he's in a better place."
. . . . . .
Suppose me dead, and then suppose
A club assembled at the Rose;
Where, from discourse of this and that,
I grow the subject of their chat;
And while they toss my name about,
With favour some, and some without,
One, quite indiff'rent in the cause,
My character impartial draws:
"The Dean, if we believe report,
Was never ill-received at court.
As for his works in verse and prose,
I own myself no judge of those,
Nor can I tell what critics thought 'em;
But this I know—all people bought 'em.
As with a moral view designed
To cure the vices of mankind,

His vein, ironically grave,
Exposed the fool and lashed the knave:
To steal a hint was never known,
But what he writ was all his own.
He never thought an honour done him
Because a duke was proud to own him;
Would rather slip aside and choose
To talk with wits in dirty shoes;
Despised the fools with stars and garters,
So often seen caressing Chartres.
He never courted men in station;
No persons held in admiration;
Of no man's greatness was afraid,
Because he sought for no man's aid.
Though trusted long in great affairs,
He gave himself no haughty airs;
Without regarding private ends,
Spent all his credit for his friends;
And only chose the wise and good—
No flatt'rers, no allies in blood;
But succored virtue in distress,
And seldom failed of good success,
As numbers in their hearts must own,
Who but for him had been unknown.
With princes kept a due decorum,
But never stood in awe before 'em:
He followed David's lesson just,
'In princes never put thy trust';
And would you make him truly sour,
Provoke him with a slave in power.
The Irish senate if you named,
With what impatience he declaimed!
Fair Liberty was all his cry,
For her he stood prepared to die;
For her he boldly stood alone;
For her he oft exposed his own.
Two kingdoms, just as faction led,
Had set a price upon his head;
But not a traitor could be found
To sell him for six hundred pound.
Had he but spared his tongue and pen,

He might have rose like other men;
But power was never in his thought,
And wealth he valued not a groat.
Ingratitude he often found,
And pitied those who meant the wound;
But kept the tenor of his mind,
To merit well of humankind,
Nor made a sacrifice of those
Who still were true, to please his foes.
He laboured many a fruitless hour
To reconcile his friends in power;
Saw mischief by a faction brewing,
While they pursued each other's ruin;
But finding vain was all his care,
He left the court in mere despair.

1731. 1739.

FROM

ON POETRY

Harmonious Cibber entertains
The court with annual birthday strains;
Whence Gay was banished in disgrace;
Where Pope will never show his face;
Where Young must torture his invention
To flatter knaves, or lose his pension.
But these are not a thousandth part
Of jobbers in the poet's art,
Attending each his proper station,
And all in due subordination,
Through ev'ry alley to be found,
In garrets high or under ground;
And when they join their pericranies,
Out skips a book of miscellanies.
Hobbes clearly proves that ev'ry creature
Lives in state of war by nature;
The greater for the smaller watch,
But meddle seldom with their match:
A whale of mod'rate size will draw
A shoal of herrings down his maw;
A fox with geese his belly crams;

A wolf destroys a thousand lambs.
But search among the rhyming race,
The brave are worried by the base:
If on Parnassus' top you sit,
You rarely bite, are always bit;
Each poet of inferior size
On you shall rail and criticise,
And strive to tear you limb from limb;
While others do as much for him.
The vermin only tease and pinch
Their foes superior by an inch:
So, nat'ralists observe, a flea
Hath smaller fleas that on him prey;
And these have smaller still to bite 'em;
And so proceed *ad infinitum.*
Thus ev'ry poet, in his kind,
Is bit by him that comes behind;
Who, though too little to be seen,
Can tease, and gall, and give the spleen.

1733. 1733.

ALEXANDER POPE

ODE ON SOLITUDE

Happy the man whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air,
In his own ground:

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire;
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter fire:

Blest who can unconcern'dly find
Hours, days, and years slide soft away,
In health of body, peace of mind,
Quiet by day,

Sound sleep by night, study and ease
Together mixed, sweet recreation,
And innocence, which most does please,
With meditation.

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown;
Thus unlamented let me die,
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie.

1700?

FROM

PASTORALS

SPRING

First in these fields I try the sylvan strains,
Nor blush to sport on Windsor's blissful plains:
Fair Thames, flow gently from thy sacred spring,
While on thy banks Sicilian Muses sing;
Let vernal airs through trembling osiers play,
And Albion's cliffs resound the rural lay.
You, that too wise for pride, too good for pow'r,
Enjoy the glory to be great no more,
And, carrying with you all the world can boast,
To all the world illustriously are lost,
O let my Muse her slender reed inspire,
Till in your native shades you tune the lyre:
So when the nightingale to rest removes,
The thrush may chant to the forsaken groves,
But, charmed to silence, listens while she sings,
And all th' aërial audience clap their wings.
Soon as the flocks shook off the nightly dews,
Two swains, whom love kept wakeful, and the Muse,
Poured o'er the whit'ning vale their fleecy care,
Fresh as the morn and as the season fair.
The dawn now blushing on the mountain's side,
Thus Daphnis spoke, and Strephon thus replied.
Daphnis. Hear how the birds, on ev'ry bloomy spray,
With joyous music wake the dawning day!
Why sit we mute when early linnets sing,
When warbling Philomel salutes the spring?

Why sit we sad when Phosphor shines so clear,
And lavish Nature paints the purple year?
Strephon. Sing, then, and Damon shall attend the strain,
While yon slow oxen turn the furrowed plain.
Here the bright crocus and blue vi'let glow,
Here western winds on breathing roses blow.
I 'll stake yon lamb, that near the fountain plays,
And from the brink his dancing shade surveys.
Daphnis. And I this bowl, where wanton ivy twines,
And swelling clusters bend the curling vines;
Four figures rising from the work appear,
The various seasons of the rolling year;
And what is that, which binds the radiant sky,
Where twelve fair signs in beauteous order lie?
Damon. Then sing by turns, by turns the Muses sing.
Now hawthorns blossom, now the daisies spring;
Now leaves the trees, and flow'rs adorn the ground:
Begin; the vales shall ev'ry note rebound.
Strephon. Inspire me, Phœbus, in my Delia's praise,
With Waller's strains or Granville's moving lays!
A milk-white bull shall at your altars stand,
That threats a fight, and spurns the rising sand.
Daphnis. O Love! for Sylvia let me gain the prize,
And make my tongue victorious as her eyes!
No lambs or sheep for victims I 'll impart,
Thy victim, Love, shall be the shepherd's heart.
Strephon. Me gentle Delia beckons from the plain,
Then, hid in shades, eludes her eager swain;
But feigns a laugh, to see me search around,
And by that laugh the willing fair is found.
Daphnis. The sprightly Sylvia trips along the green;
She runs, but hopes she does not run unseen!
While a kind glance at her pursuer flies,
How much at variance are her feet and eyes!
Strephon. O'er golden sands let rich Pactolus flow,
And trees weep amber on the banks of Po:
Blest Thames's shores the brightest beauties yield;
Feed here my lambs, I 'll seek no distant field.
Daphnis. Celestial Venus haunts Idalia's groves;
Diana Cynthus, Ceres Hybla loves:
If Windsor shades delight the matchless maid,

Cynthus and Hybla yield to Windsor shade.
Strephon. All Nature mourns, the skies relent in show'rs,
Hushed are the birds, and closed the drooping flow'rs;
If Delia smile, the flow'rs begin to spring,
The skies to brighten, and the birds to sing.
Daphnis. All Nature laughs, the groves are fresh and fair,
The sun's mild lustre warms the vital air;
If Sylvia smiles, new glories gild the shore,
And vanquished Nature seems to charm no more.
Strephon. In spring the fields, in autumn hills I love,
At morn the plains, at noon the shady grove,
But Delia always; absent from her sight,
Nor plains at morn nor groves at noon delight.
Daphnis. Sylvia 's like autumn ripe, yet mild as May;
More bright than noon, yet fresh as early day:
Ev'n spring displeases, when she shines not here;
But, blest with her, 't is spring throughout the year.
Strephon. Say, Daphnis, say, in what glad soil appears
A wondrous tree, that sacred monarchs bears?
Tell me but this, and I 'll disclaim the prize,
And give the conquest to thy Sylvia's eyes.
Daphnis. Nay, tell me, first, in what more happy fields
The Thistle springs, to which the Lily yields;
And then a nobler prize I will resign,
For Sylvia, charming Sylvia, shall be thine.
Damon. Cease to contend; for, Daphnis, I decree
The bowl to Strephon, and the lamb to thee.
Blest swains, whose nymphs in ev'ry grace excel;
Blest nymphs, whose swains those graces sing so well!
Now rise, and haste to yonder woodbine bow'rs,
A soft retreat from sudden vernal show'rs;
The turf with rural dainties shall be crowned,
While op'ning blooms diffuse their sweets around:
For see! the gath'ring flocks to shelter tend,
And from the Pleiads fruitful show'rs descend.

1704? 1709.

FROM

WINDSOR FOREST

The groves of Eden, vanished now so long,
Live in description, and look green in song:

These, were my breast inspired with equal flame,
Like them in beauty, should be like in fame.
Here hills and vales, the woodland and the plain,
Here earth and water, seem to strive again;
Not chaos-like together crushed and bruised,
But, as the world, harmoniously confused,
Where order in variety we see,
And where, though all things differ, all agree.
Here waving groves a chequered scene display,
And part admit and part exclude the day,
As some coy nymph her lover's warm address
Nor quite indulges nor can quite repress;
There, interspersed in lawns and op'ning glades,
Thin trees arise, that shun each other's shades.
Here, in full light, the russet plains extend;
There, wrapt in clouds, the bluish hills ascend.
Ev'n the wild heath displays her purple dyes,
And 'midst the desert fruitful fields arise,
That, crowned with tufted trees and springing corn,
Like verdant isles the sable waste adorn.
Let India boast her plants, nor envy we
The weeping amber or the balmy tree,
While by our oaks the precious loads are borne,
And realms commanded which those trees adorn.
Not proud Olympus yields a nobler sight,
Though gods assembled grace his tow'ring height,
Than what more humble mountains offer here,
Where, in their blessings, all those gods appear:
See Pan with flocks, with fruits Pomona crowned;
Here blushing Flora paints th' enamelled ground;
Here Ceres' gifts in waving prospect stand,
And, nodding, tempt the joyful reaper's hand;
Rich Industry sits smiling on the plains,
And peace and plenty tell a Stuart reigns.

. . . . . .

See! from the brake the whirring pheasant springs,
And mounts exulting on triumphant wings!
Short is his joy; he feels the fiery wound,
Flutters in blood, and, panting, beats the ground.
Ah, what avail his glossy, varying dyes,
His purple crest and scarlet-circled eyes,

The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,
His painted wings, and breast that flames with gold?
Nor yet, when moist Arcturus clouds the sky,
The woods and fields their pleasing toils deny.
To plains with well-breathed beagles we repair,
And trace the mazes of the circling hare
(Beasts, urged by us, their fellow-beasts pursue,
And learn of man each other to undo).
With slaught'ring guns th' unwearied fowler roves,
When frosts have whitened all the naked groves,
Where doves in flocks the leafless trees o'ershade,
And lonely wood-cocks haunt the wat'ry glade.
He lifts the tube, and levels with his eye;
Straight a short thunder breaks the frozen sky:
Oft, as in airy rings they skim the heath,
The clam'rous lapwings feel the leaden death;
Oft, as the mounting larks their notes prepare,
They fall, and leave their little lives in air.
In genial spring, beneath the quiv'ring shade,
Where cooling vapours breathe along the mead,
The patient fisher takes his silent stand,
Intent, his angle trembling in his hand;
With looks unmoved, he hopes the scaly breed,
And eyes the dancing cork and bending reed.
Our plenteous streams a various race supply:
The bright-eyed perch, with fins of Tyrian dye;
The silver eel, in shining volumes rolled;
The yellow carp, in scales bedropped with gold;
Swift trouts, diversified with crimson stains;
And pikes, the tyrants of the wat'ry plains.

1704? 1713.

FROM

AN ESSAY ON CRITICISM

First follow Nature, and your judgment frame
By her just standard, which is still the same.
Unerring Nature, still divinely bright,
One clear, unchanged, and universal light,
Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,
At once the source and end and test of Art.

Art from that fund each just supply provides,
Works without show, and without pomp presides:
In some fair body thus th' informing soul
With spirits feeds, with vigour fills, the whole,
Each motion guides, and ev'ry nerve sustains,
Itself unseen, but in th' effects remains.
Some, to whom Heav'n in wit has been profuse,
Want as much more, to turn it to its use;
For wit and judgment often are at strife,
Though meant each other's aid, like man and wife.
'T is more to guide than spur the Muse's steed,
Restrain his fury than provoke his speed;
The wingèd courser, like a gen'rous horse,
Shows most true mettle when you check his course.
Those rules of old, discovered not devised,
Are Nature still, but Nature methodized:
Nature, like liberty, is but restrained
By the same laws which first herself ordained.
Hear how learn'd Greece her useful rules indites,
When to repress and when indulge our flights:
High on Parnassus' top her sons she showed,
And pointed out those arduous paths they trod;
Held from afar, aloft, th' immortal prize,
And urged the rest by equal steps to rise.
Just precepts thus from great examples giv'n,
She drew from them what they derived from Heav'n.
The gen'rous critic fanned the poet's fire,
And taught the world with reason to admire;
Then Criticism the Muses' handmaid proved,
To dress her charms and make her more beloved.
But following wits from that intention strayed:
Who could not win the mistress wooed the maid;
Against the poets their own arms they turned,
Sure to hate most the men from whom they learned:
So modern 'pothecaries, taught the art
By doctor's bills to play the doctor's part,
Bold in the practice of mistaken rules,
Prescribe, apply, and call their masters fools.
Some on the leaves of ancient authors prey,
Nor time nor moths e'er spoiled so much as they;
Some dryly plain, without invention's aid,

Write dull receipts how poems may be made;
These leave the sense, their learning to display,
And those explain the meaning quite away.
You, then, whose judgment the right course would steer,
Know well each ancient's proper character;
His fable, subject, scope in ev'ry page;
Religion, country, genius of his age:
Without all these at once before your eyes,
Cavil you may, but never criticise.
Be Homer's works your study and delight;
Read them by day, and meditate by night;
Thence form your judgment, thence your maxims bring,
And trace the Muses upward to their spring.
Still with itself compared, his text peruse;
And let your comment be the Mantuan Muse.
When first young Maro in his boundless mind
A work t' outlast immortal Rome designed,
Perhaps he seemed above the critic's law,
And but from Nature's fountains scorned to draw;
But when t' examine ev'ry part he came,
Nature and Homer were, he found, the same:
Convinced, amazed, he checks the bold design;
And rules as strict his laboured work confine
As if the Stagyrite o'erlooked each line.
Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem:
To copy Nature is to copy them.
Some beauties yet no precepts can declare,
For there's a happiness as well as care.
Music resembles poetry: in each
Are nameless graces which no methods teach,
And which a master-hand alone can reach.
If, where the rules not far enough extend
(Since rules were made but to promote their end),
Some lucky license answer to the full
Th' intent proposed, that license is a rule.
Thus Pegasus, a nearer way to take,
May boldly deviate from the common track;
From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,
And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art,
Which, without passing through the judgment, gains
The heart, and all its end at once attains.

In prospects thus, some objects please our eyes,
Which out of Nature's common order rise,
The shapeless rock or hanging precipice.
Great wits sometimes may gloriously offend,
And rise to faults true critics dare not mend.
But though the ancients thus their rules invade
(As kings dispense with laws themselves have made),
Moderns, beware! or if you must offend
Against the precept, ne'er transgress its end;
Let it be seldom and compelled by need;
And have, at least, their precedent to plead:
The critic else proceeds without remorse,
Seizes your fame, and puts his laws in force.

. . . . . .

A little learning is a dang'rous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fired at first sight with what the Muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of arts,
While from the bounded level of our mind
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind;
But, more advanced, behold with strange surprise
New distant scenes of endless science rise.
So, pleased at first, the tow'ring Alps we try,
Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky;
Th' eternal snows appear already past,
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last:
But, those attained, we tremble to survey
The growing labours of the lengthened way;
Th' increasing prospect tires our wand'ring eyes;
Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!

A perfect judge will read each work of wit
With the same spirit that its author writ;
Survey the whole, nor seek slight faults to find
Where nature moves and rapture warms the mind;
Nor lose, for that malignant, dull delight,
The gen'rous pleasure to be charmed with wit.
But in such lays as neither ebb nor flow,
Correctly cold and regularly low,
That, shunning faults, one quiet tenor keep,

We cannot blame indeed—but we may sleep.
In wit, as Nature, what affects our hearts
Is not th' exactness of peculiar parts;
'T is not a lip or eye we beauty call,
But the joint force and full result of all.
Thus when we view some well-proportioned dome
(The world's just wonder, and ev'n thine, O Rome!),
No single parts unequally surprise;
All comes united to th' admiring eyes;
No monstrous height or breadth or length appear;
The whole at once is bold and regular.

. . . . . .

Some to conceit alone their taste confine,
And glitt'ring thoughts struck out at ev'ry line;
Pleased with a work where nothing's just or fit,
One glaring chaos and wild heap of wit.
Poets, like painters, thus unskilled to trace
The naked Nature and the living Grace,
With gold and jewels cover ev'ry part,
And hide with ornaments their want of art.
True wit is Nature to advantage dressed:
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed;
Something, whose truth convinced at sight we find,
That gives us back the image of our mind.
As shades more sweetly recommend the light,
So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit;
For works may have more wit than does 'em good,
As bodies perish through excess of blood.

Others for language all their care express,
And value books, as women men, for dress:
Their praise is still, "The style is excellent";
The sense they humbly take upon content.
Words are like leaves; and where they most abound,
Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found.
False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
Its gaudy colours spreads on ev'ry place;
The face of Nature we no more survey—
All glares alike, without distinction gay:
But true expression, like th' unchanging sun,
Clears and improves whate'er it shines upon;
It gilds all objects, but it alters none.

Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent as more suitable:
A vile conceit in pompous words expressed
Is like a clown in regal purple dressed;
For diff'rent styles with diff'rent subjects sort,
As sev'ral garbs with country, town, and court.
Some by old words to fame have made pretence,
Ancients in phrase, mere moderns in their sense;
Such laboured nothings, in so strange a style,
Amazed th' unlearn'd, and make the learnèd smile:
Unlucky, as Fungoso in the play,
These sparks with awkward vanity display
What the fine gentleman wore yesterday,
And but so mimic ancient wits, at best,
As apes our grandsires, in their doublets dressed.
In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold:
Alike fantastic if too new or old;
Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

But most by numbers judge a poet's song,
And smooth or rough, with them, is right or wrong.
In the bright Muse though thousand charms conspire,
Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire;
Who haunt Parnassus but to please their ear,
Not mend their minds, as some to church repair,
Not for the doctrine, but the music there.
These equal syllables alone require,
Though oft the ear the open vowels tire;
While expletives their feeble aid do join;
And ten low words oft creep in one dull line;
While they ring round the same unvaried chimes,
With sure returns of still expected rhymes:
Where'er you find "the cooling western breeze,"
In the next line it "whispers through the trees";
If crystal streams "with pleasing murmurs creep,"
The reader's threatened (not in vain) with "sleep":
Then, at the last and only couplet fraught
With some unmeaning thing they call a thought,
A needless Alexandrine ends the song,
That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.
Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes; and know

What 's roundly smooth or languishingly slow,
And praise the easy vigour of a line
Where Denham's strength and Waller's sweetness join.
True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance.
'T is not enough no harshness gives offence;
The sound must seem an echo to the sense:
Soft is the strain when zephyr gently blows,
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar;
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line, too, labours, and the words move slow;
Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the main.
Hear how Timotheus' varied lays surprise,
And bid alternate passions fall and rise,
While, at each change, the son of Libyan Jove
Now burns with glory, and then melts with love;
Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,
Now sighs steal out and tears begin to flow:
Persians and Greeks like turns of nature found,
And the world's victor stood subdued by sound!
The pow'r of music all our hearts allow,
And what Timotheus was is Dryden now.

1711.

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK

CANTO I

What dire offence from am'rous causes springs,
What mighty contests rise from trivial things,
I sing. This verse to Caryll, Muse, is due;
This ev'n Belinda may vouchsafe to view.
Slight is the subject; but not so the praise,
If she inspire and he approve my lays.
Say what strange motive, goddess, could compel
A well-bred lord t' assault a gentle belle?
O say what stranger cause, yet unexplored,
Could make a gentle belle reject a lord?
In tasks so bold can little men engage,

And in soft bosoms dwells such mighty rage?
Sol through white curtains shot a tim'rous ray,
And oped those eyes that must eclipse the day;
Now lap-dogs give themselves the rousing shake,
And sleepless lovers, just at twelve, awake;
Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knocked the ground,
And the pressed watch returned a silver sound.
Belinda still her downy pillow pressed;
Her guardian sylph prolonged the balmy rest.
'T was he had summoned to her silent bed
The morning dream that hovered o'er her head:
A youth more glitt'ring than a birth-night beau
(That ev'n in slumber caused her cheek to glow)
Seemed to her ear his winning lips to lay,
And thus in whispers said, or seemed to say:
"Fairest of mortals, thou distinguished care
Of thousand bright inhabitants of air!
If e'er one vision touched thy infant thought,
Of all the nurse and all the priest have taught
Of airy elves by moonlight shadows seen,
The silver token, and the circled green,
Or virgins visited by angel-pow'rs
With golden crowns and wreaths of heav'nly flow'rs,—
Hear and believe! thy own importance know,
Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.
Some secret truths, from learned pride concealed,
To maids alone and children are revealed.
What though no credit doubting wits may give?
The fair and innocent shall still believe.
Know, then, unnumbered spirits round thee fly,
The light militia of the lower sky;
These, though unseen, are ever on the wing,
Hang o'er the box, and hover round the Ring.
Think what an equipage thou hast in air,
And view with scorn two pages and a chair.
As now your own, our beings were of old,
And once inclosed in woman's beauteous mould;
Thence, by a soft transition, we repair
From earthly vehicles to these of air.
Think not, when woman's transient breath is fled,
That all her vanities at once are dead:

Succeeding vanities she still regards,
And, though she plays no more, o'erlooks the cards;
Her joy in gilded chariots, when alive,
And love of ombre, after death survive.
For when the fair in all their pride expire,
To their first elements their souls retire:
The sprites of fiery termagants in flame
Mount up, and take a salamander's name;
Soft, yielding minds to water glide away,
And sip, with nymphs, their elemental tea;
The graver prude sinks downward to a gnome,
In search of mischief still on earth to roam;
The light coquettes in sylphs aloft repair,
And sport and flutter in the fields of air.
"Know further yet: whoever fair and chaste
Rejects mankind, is by some sylph embraced;
For spirits, freed from mortal laws, with ease
Assume what sexes and what shapes they please.
What guards the purity of melting maids,
In courtly balls and midnight masquerades,
Safe from the treach'rous friend, the daring spark,
The glance by day, the whisper in the dark,
When kind occasion prompts their warm desires,
When music softens, and when dancing fires?
'T is but their sylph, the wise celestials know,
Though honour is the word with men below.
Some nymphs there are, too conscious of their face,
For life predestined to the gnomes' embrace.
These swell their prospects and exalt their pride,
When offers are disdained and love denied;
Then gay ideas crowd the vacant brain,
While peers, and dukes, and all their sweeping train,
And garters, stars, and coronets appear,
And in soft sounds 'Your Grace' salutes their ear.
'T is these that early taint the female soul,
Instruct the eyes of young coquettes to roll,
Teach infant-cheeks a bidden blush to know,
And little hearts to flutter at a beau.
Oft, when the world imagine women stray,
The sylphs through mystic mazes guide their way;
Through all the giddy circle they pursue,

And old impertinence expel by new.
What tender maid but must a victim fall
To one man's treat but for another's ball?
When Florio speaks, what virgin could withstand,
If gentle Damon did not squeeze her hand?
With varying vanities, from ev'ry part,
They shift the moving toyshop of their heart;
Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots sword-knots strive,
Beaux banish beaux, and coaches coaches drive.
This erring mortals levity may call;
Oh blind to truth! the sylphs contrive it all.
"Of these am I, who thy protection claim;
A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name.
Late, as I ranged the crystal wilds of air,
In the clear mirror of thy ruling star
I saw, alas! some dread event impend,
Ere to the main this morning sun descend;
But Heav'n reveals not what, or how, or where.
Warned by the sylph, oh pious maid, beware!
This to disclose is all thy guardian can:
Beware of all, but most beware of man!"
He said; when Shock, who thought she slept too long,
Leaped up, and waked his mistress with his tongue.
'T was then, Belinda, if report say true,
Thy eyes first opened on a billet-doux:
"Wounds," "charms," and "ardours" were no sooner read
But all the vision vanished from thy head.
And now, unveiled, the toilet stands displayed,
Each silver vase in mystic order laid.
First, robed in white, the nymph intent adores,
With head uncovered, the cosmetic pow'rs:
A heav'nly image in the glass appears:
To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears.
Th' inferior priestess, at her altar's side,
Trembling, begins the sacred rites of pride.
Unnumbered treasures ope at once, and here
The various off'rings of the world appear.
From each she nicely culls with curious toil,
And decks the goddess with the glitt'ring spoil:
This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,

And all Arabia breathes from yonder box;
The tortoise here and elephant unite,
Transformed to combs, the speckled and the white;
Here files of pins extend their shining rows,
Puffs, powders, patches, Bibles, billets-doux.
Now awful beauty puts on all its arms:
The fair each moment rises in her charms,
Repairs her smiles, awakens ev'ry grace,
And calls forth all the wonders of her face;
Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.
The busy sylphs surround their darling care:
These set the head, and those divide the hair;
Some fold the sleeve, whilst others plait the gown;
And Betty's praised for labours not her own.

CANTO II

Not with more glories, in th' ethereal plain,
The sun first rises o'er the purpled main,
Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams
Launched on the bosom of the silver Thames.
Fair nymphs and well-dressed youths around her shone,
But ev'ry eye was fixed on her alone.
On her white breast a sparkling cross she wore,
Which Jews might kiss and infidels adore.
Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,
Quick as her eyes, and as unfixed as those.
Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,
And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.
Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,
Might hide her faults, if belles had faults to hide;
If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face and you'll forget 'em all.
This nymph, to the destruction of mankind,
Nourished two locks, which graceful hung behind
In equal curls, and well conspired to deck,
With shining ringlets, the smooth iv'ry neck.
Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,
And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.

With hairy springes we the birds betray,
Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey;
Fair tresses man's imperial race insnare,
And beauty draws us with a single hair.
Th' advent'rous Baron the bright locks admired;
He saw, he wished, and to the prize aspired.
Resolved to win, he meditates the way,
By force to ravish or by fraud betray;
For when success a lover's toil attends,
Few ask if fraud or force attained his ends.
For this, ere Phœbus rose, he had implored
Propitious Heav'n, and ev'ry Pow'r adored,
But chiefly Love: to Love an altar built
Of twelve vast French romances, neatly gilt;
There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves,
And all the trophies of his former loves.
With tender billets-doux he lights the pyre,
And breathes three am'rous sighs to raise the fire;
Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes
Soon to obtain and long possess the prize:
The Pow'rs gave ear, and granted half his pray'r;
The rest the winds dispersed in empty air.

But now secure the painted vessel glides,
The sunbeams trembling on the floating tides,
While melting music steals upon the sky,
And softened sounds along the waters die;
Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently play,
Belinda smiled, and all the world was gay.
All but the sylph; with careful thoughts oppressed,
Th' impending woe sat heavy on his breast.
He summons straight his denizens of air:
The lucid squadrons round the sails repair;
Soft o'er the shrouds aërial whispers breathe,
That seemed but zephyrs to the train beneath.
Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,
Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold;
Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight,
Their fluid bodies half dissolved in light.
Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,
Thin glitt'ring textures of the filmy dew,
Dipped in the richest tincture of the skies,

Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes,
While ev'ry beam new transient colours flings,
Colours that change whene'er they wave their wings.
Amid the circle, on the gilded mast,
Superior by the head, was Ariel placed;
His purple pinions op'ning to the sun,
He raised his azure wand, and thus begun:
"Ye sylphs and sylphids, to your chief give ear!
Fays, fairies, genii, elves, and demons, hear!
Ye know the spheres and various tasks assigned
By laws eternal to th' aërial kind.
Some in the fields of purest ether play,
And bask and whiten in the blaze of day.
Some guide the course of wand'ring orbs on high,
Or roll the planets through the boundless sky.
Some less refined, beneath the moon's pale light
Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night,
Or suck the mists in grosser air below,
Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,
Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main,
Or o'er the glebe distil the kindly rain.
Others on earth o'er human race preside,
Watch all their ways, and all their actions guide;
Of these the chief the care of nations own,
And guard with arms divine the British throne.
Our humbler province is to tend the fair,
Not a less pleasing though less glorious care:
To save the powder from too rude a gale,
Nor let th' imprisoned essences exhale;
To draw fresh colours from the vernal flow'rs;
To steal from rainbows, ere they drop in show'rs,
A brighter wash; to curl their waving hairs,
Assist their blushes, and inspire their airs;
Nay, oft, in dreams invention we bestow
To change a flounce or add a furbelow.
"This day black omens threat the brightest fair
That e'er deserved a watchful spirit's care;
Some dire disaster or by force or slight,
But what or where, the Fates have wrapt in night:
Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,
Or some frail china jar receive a flaw;

Or stain her honour or her new brocade;
Forget her pray'rs, or miss a masquerade;
Or lose her heart or necklace, at a ball;
Or whether Heav'n has doomed that Shock must fall.
Haste, then, ye spirits! to your charge repair:
The flutt'ring fan be Zephyretta's care;
The drops to thee, Brillante, we consign;
And, Momentilla, let the watch be thine;
Do thou, Crispissa, tend her fav'rite lock;
Ariel himself shall be the guard of Shock.
To fifty chosen Sylphs, of special note,
We trust th' important charge, the petticoat; . . . .
Form a strong line about the silver bound,
And guard the wide circumference around.
Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,
His post neglects or leaves the fair at large,
Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his sins:
Be stopped in vials, or transfixed with pins,
Or plunged in lakes of bitter washes lie,
Or wedged, whole ages, in a bodkin's eye;
Gums and pomatums shall his flight restrain,
While clogged he beats his silken wings in vain;
Or alum styptics, with contracting pow'r,
Shrink his thin essence like a rivelled flow'r;
Or, as Ixion fixed, the wretch shall feel
The giddy motion of the whirling mill,
In fumes of burning chocolate shall glow,
And tremble at the sea that froths below!"
He spoke: the spirits from the sails descend;
Some, orb in orb, around the nymph extend;
Some thrid the mazy ringlets of her hair;
Some hang upon the pendants of her ear;
With beating hearts the dire event they wait,
Anxious, and trembling for the birth of Fate.

CANTO III

Close by those meads, forever crowned with flow'rs,
Where Thames with pride surveys his rising tow'rs,
There stands a structure of majestic frame,
Which from the neighb'ring Hampton takes its name.
Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom

Of foreign tyrants and of nymphs at home;
Here thou, great Anna, whom three realms obey,
Dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes tea.
Hither the heroes and the nymphs resort,
To taste a while the pleasures of a court.
In various talk th' instructive hours they passed:
Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;
One speaks the glory of the British Queen,
And one describes a charming Indian screen;
A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes;
At ev'ry word a reputation dies.
Snuff or the fan supply each pause of chat,
With singing, laughing, ogling, and all that.
Meanwhile, declining from the noon of day,
The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray;
The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,
And wretches hang that jurymen may dine;
The merchant from th' Exchange returns in peace;
And the long labours of the toilet cease.
Belinda now, whom thirst of fame invites,
Burns to encounter two advent'rous knights,
At ombre singly to decide their doom,
And swells her breast with conquests yet to come.
Straight the three bands prepare in arms to join,
Each band the number of the sacred Nine.
Soon as she spreads her hand, th' aërial guard
Descend, and sit on each important card:
First Ariel perched upon a Matadore,
Then each according to the rank they bore;
For sylphs, yet mindful of their ancient race,
Are, as when women, wondrous fond of place.
Behold four Kings in majesty revered,
With hoary whiskers and a forky beard;
And four fair Queens, whose hands sustain a flow'r,
Th' expressive emblem of their softer pow'r;
Four Knaves in garbs succinct, a trusty band,
Caps on their heads, and halberts in their hand;
And parti-coloured troops, a shining train,
Draw forth to combat on the velvet plain.
The skilful nymph reviews her force with care:
"Let spades be trumps!" she said, and trumps they were.

Now move to war her sable Matadores,
In show like leaders of the swarthy Moors.
Spadillio first, unconquerable lord,
Led off two captive trumps, and swept the board.
As many more Manillio forced to yield,
And marched a victor from the verdant field.
Him Basto followed; but his fate, more hard,
Gained but one trump and one plebeian card.
With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,
The hoary Majesty of Spades appears;
Puts forth one manly leg, to sight revealed,
The rest his many-coloured robe concealed.
The rebel Knave, who dares his prince engage,
Proves the just victim of his royal rage.
Ev'n mighty Pam, that kings and queens o'erthrew,
And mowed down armies in the fights of Loo,
Sad chance of war! now destitute of aid,
Falls undistinguished by the victor Spade!
Thus far both armies to Belinda yield;
Now to the Baron Fate inclines the field.
His warlike Amazon her host invades,
Th' imperial consort of the Crown of Spades:
The Club's black tyrant first her victim died,
Spite of his haughty mien and barb'rous pride;
What boots the regal circle on his head,
His giant limbs, in state unwieldy spread,
That long behind he trails his pompous robe,
And of all monarchs only grasps the globe?
The Baron now his Diamonds pours apace!
Th' embroidered King, who shows but half his face,
And his refulgent Queen, with pow'rs combined,
Of broken troops an easy conquest find.
Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, in wild disorder seen,
With throngs promiscuous strew the level green.
Thus when, dispersed, a routed army runs,
Of Asia's troops and Afric's sable sons,
With like confusion diff'rent nations fly,
Of various habit and of various dye;
The pierced battalions disunited fall,
In heaps on heaps; one fate o'erwhelms them all.
The Knave of Diamonds tries his wily arts,

And wins (oh, shameful chance!) the Queen of Hearts.
At this the blood the virgin's cheek forsook;
A livid paleness spreads o'er all her look;
She sees, and trembles at th' approaching ill,
Just in the jaws of ruin and codille.
And now (as oft in some distempered state)
On one nice trick depends the gen'ral fate:
An Ace of Hearts steps forth; the King, unseen,
Lurked in her hand, and mourned his captive Queen;
He springs to vengeance with an eager pace,
And falls like thunder on the prostrate Ace.
The nymph, exulting, fills with shouts the sky;
The walls, the woods, and long canals reply.

Oh, thoughtless mortals! ever blind to Fate,
Too soon dejected, and too soon elate!
Sudden these honours shall be snatched away,
And cursed forever this victorious day.

For lo! the board with cups and spoons is crowned,
The berries crackle, and the mill turns round;
On shining altars of japan they raise
The silver lamp; the fiery spirits blaze;
From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,
While China's earth receives the smoking tide:
At once they gratify their scent and taste,
And frequent cups prolong the rich repast.
Straight hover round the fair her airy band;
Some, as she sipped, the fuming liquor fanned,
Some o'er her lap their careful plumes displayed,
Trembling, and conscious of the rich brocade.
Coffee (which makes the politician wise,
And see through all things with his half-shut eyes)
Sent up in vapours to the Baron's brain
New stratagems the radiant lock to gain.
Ah, cease, rash youth! desist ere 't is too late;
Fear the just gods, and think of Scylla's fate:
Changed to a bird, and sent to flit in air,
She dearly pays for Nisus' injured hair!
But when to mischief mortals bend their will,
How soon they find fit instruments of ill!
Just then, Clarissa drew with tempting grace
A two-edged weapon from her shining case:

So ladies in romance assist their knight,
Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.
He takes the gift with rev'rence, and extends
The little engine on his fingers' ends;
This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,
As o'er the fragrant steams she bends her head.
Swift to the lock a thousand sprites repair;
A thousand wings, by turns, blow back the hair;
And thrice they twitched the diamond in her ear;
Thrice she looked back, and thrice the foe drew near.
Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought
The close recesses of the virgin's thought;
As, on the nosegay in her breast reclined,
He watched th' ideas rising in her mind,
Sudden he viewed, in spite of all her art,
An earthly lover lurking at her heart.
Amazed, confused, he found his pow'r expired,
Resigned to Fate, and with a sigh retired.
The peer now spreads the glitt'ring forfex wide
T' inclose the lock; now joins it, to divide.
Ev'n then, before the fatal engine closed,
A wretched sylph too fondly interposed;
Fate urged the shears, and cut the sylph in twain
(But airy substance soon unites again);
The meeting points the sacred hair dissever
From the fair head forever and forever!
Then flashed the living lightning from her eyes,
And screams of horror rend th' affrighted skies.
Not louder shrieks to pitying Heaven are cast,
When husbands or when lap-dogs breathe their last,
Or when rich China vessels, fall'n from high,
In glitt'ring dust and painted fragments lie!
"Let wreaths of triumph now my temples twine!"
The victor cried; "the glorious prize is mine!
While fish in streams, or birds delight in air,
Or in a coach and six the British fair;
As long as 'Atalantis' shall be read,
Or the small pillow grace a lady's bed;
While visits shall be paid on solemn days,
When num'rous wax-lights in bright order blaze;
While nymphs take treats, or assignations give;

So long my honour, name, and praise shall live!"
What Time would spare, from steel receives its date;
And monuments, like men, submit to Fate.
Steel could the labour of the gods destroy,
And strike to dust th' imperial tow'rs of Troy.
Steel could the works of mortal pride confound,
And hew triumphal arches to the ground.
What wonder then, fair nymph, thy hair should feel
The conqu'ring force of unresisted steel?

CANTO IV

But anxious cares the pensive nymph oppress,
And secret passions laboured in her breast.
Not youthful kings in battle seized alive,
Not scornful virgins who their charms survive,
Not ardent lovers robbed of all their bliss,
Not ancient ladies when refused a kiss,
Not tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,
Not Cynthia when her manteau's pinned awry,
E'er felt such rage, resentment, and despair
As thou, sad virgin, for thy ravished hair.

For, that sad moment when the sylphs withdrew,
And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,
Umbriel, a dusky, melancholy sprite
As ever sullied the fair face of light,
Down to the central earth, his proper scene,
Repaired to search the gloomy cave of Spleen.
Swift on his sooty pinions flits the gnome,
And in a vapour reached the dismal dome.
No cheerful breeze this sullen region knows,
The dreaded east is all the wind that blows.
Here in a grotto, sheltered close from air,
And screened in shades from day's detested glare,
She sighs forever on her pensive bed,
Pain at her side, and Megrim at her head.—
Two handmaids wait the throne, alike in place,
But diff'ring far in figure and in face.
Here stood Ill-Nature like an ancient maid,
Her wrinkled form in black and white arrayed;
With store of pray'rs, for mornings, nights, and noons,
Her hand is filled, her bosom with lampoons.

There Affectation, with a sickly mien,
Shows in her cheek the roses of eighteen;
Practised to lisp and hang the head aside,
Faints into airs, and languishes with pride;
On the rich quilt sinks with becoming woe,
Wrapt in a gown, for sickness and for show.
(The fair ones feel such maladies as these,
When each new night-dress gives a new disease.)
A constant vapour o'er the palace flies,
Strange phantoms rising as the mists arise,
Dreadful as hermits' dreams in haunted shades,
Or bright as visions of expiring maids:
Now glaring fiends, and snakes on rolling spires,
Pale spectres, gaping tombs, and purple fires;
Now lakes of liquid gold, Elysian scenes,
And crystal domes, and angels in machines.
Unnumbered throngs on ev'ry side are seen,
Of bodies changed to various forms by Spleen:
Here living teapots stand, one arm held out,
One bent—the handle this, and that the spout;
A pipkin there, like Homer's tripod, walks;
Here sighs a jar, and there a goose-pie talks;
Men prove with child, as pow'rful fancy works;
And maids, turned bottles, call aloud for corks.
Safe passed the gnome through this fantastic band,
A branch of healing spleenwort in his hand,
Then thus addressed the Pow'r: "Hail, wayward Queen!
Who rule the sex to fifty from fifteen;
Parent of vapours and of female wit,
Who give th' hysteric or poëtic fit;
On various tempers act by various ways—
Make some take physic, others scribble plays;
Who cause the proud their visits to delay,
And send the godly in a pet to pray.
A nymph there is, that all thy pow'r disdains,
And thousands more in equal mirth maintains.
But oh, if e'er thy gnome could spoil a grace,
Or raise a pimple on a beauteous face,
Like citron-waters matrons' cheeks inflame,
Or change complexions at a losing game, ...
Or caused suspicion when no soul was rude,

Or discomposed the head-dress of a prude,
Or e'er to costive lap-dog gave disease,
Which not the tears of brightest eyes could ease,
Hear me, and touch Belinda with chagrin:
That single act gives half the world the spleen."
The goddess, with a discontented air,
Seems to reject him, though she grants his pray'r.
A wondrous bag with both her hands she binds,
Like that where once Ulysses held the winds;
There she collects the force of female lungs,
Sighs, sobs, and passions, and the war of tongues;
A vial next she fills with fainting fears,
Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears.
The gnome, rejoicing, bears her gifts away,
Spreads his black wings, and slowly mounts to day.
Sunk in Thalestris' arms the nymph he found,
Her eyes dejected and her hair unbound.
Full o'er their heads the swelling bag he rent,
And all the Furies issued at the vent.
Belinda burns with more than mortal ire,
And fierce Thalestris fans the rising fire:
"O wretched maid!" she spread her hands, and cried,
While Hampton's echoes "Wretched maid!" replied;
"Was it for this you took such constant care
The bodkin, comb, and essence to prepare?
For this your locks in paper durance bound?
For this with tort'ring irons wreathed around?
For this with fillets strained your tender head,
And bravely bore the double loads of lead?
Gods! shall the ravisher display your hair,
While the fops envy, and the ladies stare!
Honour forbid! at whose unrivalled shrine
Ease, pleasure, virtue, all our sex resign.
Methinks already I your tears survey,
Already hear the horrid things they say,
Already see you a degraded toast,
And all your honour in a whisper lost!
How shall I then your helpless fame defend?
'T will then be infamy to seem your friend!
And shall this prize, th' inestimable prize,
Exposed through crystal to the gazing eyes,

And heightened by the diamond's circling rays,
On that rapacious hand forever blaze?
Sooner shall grass in Hyde Park Circus grow,
And wits take lodgings in the sound of Bow;
Sooner let earth, air, sea, to chaos fall!
Men, monkeys, lap-dogs, parrots perish all!"
She said; then, raging, to Sir Plume repairs,
And bids her beau demand the precious hairs
(Sir Plume, of amber snuff-box justly vain,
And the nice conduct of a clouded cane).
With earnest eyes, and round, unthinking face,
He first the snuff-box opened, then the case,
And thus broke out: "My Lord, why, what the devil!
Zounds! damn the lock! 'fore Gad, you must be civil!
Plague on 't! 't is past a jest—nay, prithee, pox!
Give her the hair." He spoke, and rapped his box.
"It grieves me much," replied the peer again,
"Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain;
But by this lock, this sacred lock, I swear
(Which never more shall join its parted hair,
Which never more its honours shall renew,
Clipped from the lovely head where late it grew)
That, while my nostrils draw the vital air,
This hand, which won it, shall forever wear."
He spoke, and, speaking, in proud triumph spread
The long-contended honours of her head.
But Umbriel, hateful gnome, forbears not so;
He breaks the vial whence the sorrows flow.
Then see! the nymph in beauteous grief appears,
Her eyes half-languishing, half-drowned in tears;
On her heaved bosom hung her drooping head,
Which, with a sigh, she raised, and thus she said:
"Forever cursed be this detested day,
Which snatched my best, my fav'rite curl away!
Happy, ah ten times happy, had I been,
If Hampton Court these eyes had never seen!
Yet am not I the first mistaken maid,
By love of courts to num'rous ills betrayed.
Oh, had I rather, unadmired, remained
In some lone isle or distant northern land,
Where the gilt chariot never marks the way,

Where none learn ombre, none e'er taste bohea!
There kept my charms concealed from mortal eye,
Like roses that in deserts bloom and die.
What moved my mind with youthful lords to roam?
Oh, had I stayed, and said my pray'rs at home!
'T was this the morning omens seemed to tell:
Thrice from my trembling hand the patch-box fell;
The tott'ring china shook without a wind;
Nay, Poll sat mute, and Shock was most unkind!
A sylph, too, warned me of the threats of Fate,
In mystic visions, now believed too late!
See the poor remnants of these slighted hairs!
My hands shall rend what ev'n thy rapine spares.
These, in two sable ringlets taught to break,
Once gave new beauties to the snowy neck;
The sister-lock now sits uncouth alone,
And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;
Uncurled it hangs, the fatal shears demands,
And tempts once more thy sacrilegious hands.
Oh, hadst thou, cruel! been content to seize
Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these!"

CANTO V

She said: the pitying audience melt in tears;
But Fate and Jove had stopped the Baron's ears.
In vain Thalestris with reproach assails,
For who can move when fair Belinda fails?
Not half so fixed the Trojan could remain,
While Anna begged and Dido raged in vain.
Then grave Clarissa graceful waved her fan;
Silence ensued, and thus the nymph began:
"Say, why are beauties praised and honoured most,
The wise man's passion, and the vain man's toast?
Why decked with all that land and sea afford,
Why angels called, and angel-like adored?
Why round our coaches crowd the white-gloved beaux,
Why bows the side-box from its inmost rows?
How vain are all these glories, all our pains,
Unless good sense preserve what beauty gains;
That men may say, when we the front box grace,
'Behold the first in virtue as in face!'

Oh, if to dance all night, and dress all day,
Charmed the small-pox, or chased old age away,
Who would not scorn what housewife's cares produce,
Or who would learn one earthly thing of use?
To patch, nay ogle, might become a saint,
Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint.
But since, alas! frail beauty must decay;
Curled or uncurled, since locks will turn to grey;
Since, painted or not painted, all shall fade,
And she who scorns a man must die a maid;
What then remains but well our pow'r to use,
And keep good humour still, whate'er we lose?
And trust me, dear, good humour can prevail,
When airs and flights and screams and scolding fail.
Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll;
Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul."
So spoke the dame, but no applause ensued;
Belinda frowned, Thalestris called her prude.
"To arms, to arms!" the fierce virago cries,
And swift as lightning to the combat flies.
All side in parties, and begin th' attack;
Fans clap, silks rustle, and tough whalebones crack;
Heroes' and heroines' shouts confus'dly rise,
And base and treble voices strike the skies.
No common weapons in their hands are found;
Like gods they fight, nor dread a mortal wound.
So when bold Homer makes the gods engage,
And heav'nly breasts with human passions rage,
'Gainst Pallas Mars, Latona Hermes arms,
And all Olympus rings with loud alarms;
Jove's thunder roars, heav'n trembles all around,
Blue Neptune storms, the bell'wing deeps resound,
Earth shakes her nodding tow'rs, the ground gives way,
And the pale ghosts start at the flash of day!
Triumphant Umbriel, on a sconce's height,
Clapped his glad wings, and sate to view the fight.
Propped on their bodkin spears, the sprites survey
The growing combat or assist the fray.
While through the press enraged Thalestris flies,
And scatters death around from both her eyes,
A beau and witling perished in the throng;

One died in metaphor, and one in song:
"O cruel nymph! a living death I bear!"
Cried Dapperwit, and sunk beside his chair;
A mournful glance Sir Fopling upwards cast—
"Those eyes are made so killing!" was his last.
Thus on Meander's flow'ry margin lies
Th' expiring swan, and as he sings he dies.
When bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa down,
Chloe stepped in and killed him with a frown;
She smiled to see the doughty hero slain,
But at her smile the beau revived again.
Now Jove suspends his golden scales in air,
Weighs the men's wits against the lady's hair:
The doubtful beam long nods from side to side;
At length the wits mount up, the hairs subside.
See fierce Belinda on the Baron flies,
With more than usual lightning in her eyes;
Nor feared the chief th' unequal fight to try,
Who sought no more than on his foe to die.
But this bold lord, with manly strength endued,
She with one finger and a thumb subdued:
Just where the breath of life his nostrils drew,
A charge of snuff the wily virgin threw;
The gnomes direct, to ev'ry atom just,
The pungent grains of titillating dust;
Sudden, with starting tears each eye o'erflows,
And the high dome re-echoes to his nose.
"Now meet thy fate!" incensed Belinda cried,
And drew a deadly bodkin from her side.
(The same, his ancient personage to deck,
Her great-great-grandsire wore about his neck,
In three seal-rings; which after, melted down,
Formed a vast buckle for his widow's gown;
Her infant grandame's whistle next it grew—
The bells she jingled, and the whistle blew;
Then in a bodkin graced her mother's hairs,
Which long she wore, and now Belinda wears.)
"Boast not my fall," he cried, "insulting foe!
Thou by some other shalt be laid as low.
Nor think to die dejects my lofty mind;
All that I dread is leaving you behind!

Rather than so, ah let me still survive,
And burn in Cupid's flames—but burn alive."
"Restore the lock!" she cries; and all around
"Restore the lock!" the vaulted roofs rebound.
Not fierce Othello in so loud a strain
Roared for the handkerchief that caused his pain.
But see how oft ambitious aims are crossed,
And chiefs contend till all the prize is lost!
The lock, obtained with guilt and kept with pain,
In ev'ry place is sought, but sought in vain:
With such a prize no mortal must be blest,
So Heav'n decrees! with Heav'n who can contest?
Some thought it mounted to the lunar sphere,
Since all things lost on earth are treasured there.
There heroes' wits are kept in pond'rous vases,
And beaux' in snuff-boxes and tweezer-cases;
There broken vows and death-bed alms are found,
And lovers' hearts, with ends of ribbon bound,
The courtier's promises, and sick man's pray'rs,
The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs,
Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,
Dried butterflies, and tomes of casuistry.
But trust the Muse: she saw it upward rise,
Though mark'd by none but quick poetic eyes
(So Rome's great founder to the heav'ns withdrew,
To Proculus alone confessed in view);
A sudden star, it shot through liquid air,
And drew behind a radiant trail of hair.
Not Berenice's locks first rose so bright,
The heav'ns bespangling with disheveled light.
The sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,
And, pleased, pursue its progress through the skies.
This the beau monde shall from the Mall survey,
And hail with music its propitious ray;
This the blest lover shall for Venus take,
And send up vows from Rosamonda's lake;
This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless skies,
When next he looks through Galileo's eyes,
And hence th' egregious wizard shall foredoom
The fate of Louis and the fall of Rome.

Then cease, bright nymph, to mourn thy ravished hair,

Which adds new glory to the shining sphere!
Not all the tresses that fair head can boast
Shall draw such envy as the lock you lost;
For after all the murders of your eye,
When, after millions slain, yourself shall die,
When those fair suns shall set, as set they must,
And all those tresses shall be laid in dust,
This lock the Muse shall consecrate to fame,
And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name.

1712. 1714.

FROM

TRANSLATIONS FROM HOMER

Twelve days were past, and now the dawning light
The gods had summoned to th' Olympian height;
Jove, first ascending from the wat'ry bow'rs,
Leads the long order of ethereal Pow'rs:
When like the morning mist, in early day,
Rose from the flood the Daughter of the Sea,
And to the seats divine her flight addressed.
There, far apart, and high above the rest,
The Thund'rer sat, where old Olympus shrouds
His hundred heads in heaven and props the clouds.
Suppliant the goddess stood; one hand she placed
Beneath his beard, and one his knees embraced.
"If e'er, O Father of the Gods!" she said,
"My words could please thee or my actions aid,
Some marks of honour on my son bestow,
And pay in glory what in life you owe.
Fame is at least by heav'nly promise due
To life so short, and now dishonoured too.
Avenge this wrong, oh ever just and wise!
Let Greece be humbled, and the Trojans rise,
Till the proud king and all th' Achaian race
Shall heap with honours him they now disgrace!"

1714. 1715.

FROM

ELOISA TO ABELARD

In these deep solitudes and awful cells,
Where heav'nly-pensive Contemplation dwells,

And ever-musing Melancholy reigns,
What means this tumult in a vestal's veins?
Why rove my thoughts beyond this last retreat?
Why feels my heart its long-forgotten heat?
Yet, yet I love!—from Abelard it came,
And Eloisa yet must kiss the name.
Dear fatal name! rest ever unrevealed,
Nor pass these lips, in holy silence sealed.
Hide it, my heart, within that close disguise,
Where, mixed with God's, his loved idea lies.
Oh, write it not, my hand—the name appears
Already written—wash it out, my tears!
In vain lost Eloisa weeps and prays:
Her heart still dictates, and her hand obeys.
Relentless walls, whose darksome round contains
Repentant sighs and voluntary pains;
Ye rugged rocks, which holy knees have worn;
Ye grots and caverns shagged with horrid thorn;
Shrines, where their vigils pale-eyed virgins keep;
And pitying saints, whose statues learn to weep;
Though cold like you, unmoved and silent grown,
I have not yet forgot myself to stone.
All is not Heav'n's while Abelard has part;
Still rebel nature holds out half my heart;
Nor pray'rs nor fasts its stubborn pulse restrain,
Nor tears for ages taught to flow in vain.
Soon as thy letters, trembling, I unclose,
That well-known name awakens all my woes.
Oh, name forever sad! forever dear!
Still breathed in sighs, still ushered with a tear.
I tremble too, where'er my own I find;
Some dire misfortune follows close behind.
Line after line my gushing eyes o'erflow,
Led through a sad variety of woe:
Now warm in love; now with'ring in my bloom,
Lost in a convent's solitary gloom!
There stern religion quenched th' unwilling flame;
There died the best of passions, love and fame.
Yet write, oh write me all, that I may join
Griefs to thy griefs, and echo sighs to thine.
Nor foes nor fortune take this pow'r away;

And is my Abelard less kind than they?
Tears still are mine, and those I need not spare;
Love but demands what else were shed in pray'r.
No happier task these faded eyes pursue;
To read and weep is all they now can do.
Then share thy pain, allow that sad relief;
Ah, more than share it, give me all thy grief!
Heav'n first taught letters for some wretch's aid,
Some banished lover or some captive maid:
They live, they speak, they breathe what love inspires,
Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires;
The virgin's wish without her fears impart,
Excuse the blush, and pour out all the heart;
Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,
And waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole.

. . . . . .

How happy is the blameless vestal's lot,
The world forgetting, by the world forgot;
Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind,
Each pray'r accepted, and each wish resigned;
Labour and rest, that equal periods keep;
"Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep;"
Desires composed, affections ever ev'n;
Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to Heav'n.
Grace shines around her with serenest beams,
And whisp'ring angels prompt her golden dreams.
For her th' unfading rose of Eden blooms,
And wings of seraphs shed divine perfumes;
For her the Spouse prepares the bridal ring;
For her white virgins hymenæals sing;
To sounds of heav'nly harps she dies away,
And melts in visions of eternal day.

Far other dreams my erring soul employ,
Far other raptures of unholy joy.
When, at the close of each sad, sorr'wing day,
Fancy restores what vengeance snatched away,
Then conscience sleeps, and leaving nature free,
All my loose soul unbounded springs to thee!
O curst, dear horrors of all-conscious night!
How glowing guilt exalts the keen delight!
Provoking demons all restraint remove,

And stir within me ev'ry source of love.
I hear thee, view thee, gaze o'er all thy charms,
And round thy phantom glue my clasping arms.
I wake—no more I hear, no more I view;
The phantom flies me, as unkind as you.
I call aloud; it hears not what I say:
I stretch my empty arms; it glides away.
To dream once more I close my willing eyes;
Ye soft illusions, dear deceits, arise!
Alas, no more! methinks we wand'ring go
Through dreary wastes, and weep each other's woe,
Where round some mould'ring tow'r pale ivy creeps,
And low-browed rocks hang nodding o'er the deeps.
Sudden you mount, you beckon from the skies;
Clouds interpose, waves roar, and winds arise.
I shriek, start up, the same sad prospect find,
And wake to all the griefs I left behind.

. . . . . .

While prostrate here in humble grief I lie,
Kind, virtuous drops just gath'ring in my eye,
While praying, trembling, in the dust I roll,
And dawning grace is op'ning on my soul,
Come, if thou dar'st, all charming as thou art!
Oppose thyself to Heav'n; dispute my heart;
Come; with one glance of those deluding eyes
Blot out each bright idea of the skies;
Take back that grace, those sorrows, and those tears;
Take back my fruitless penitence and pray'rs;
Snatch me, just mounting, from the blest abode;
Assist the fiends, and tear me from my God!
—No, fly me, fly me, far as pole from pole!
Rise Alps beween us! and whole oceans roll!
Ah, come not, write not, think not once of me,
Nor share one pang of all I felt for thee!
Thy oaths I quit, thy memory resign;
Forget, renounce me, hate whate'er was mine.
Fair eyes and tempting looks (which yet I view!),
Long loved, adored ideas, all adieu!
Oh, Grace serene! oh, Virtue heav'nly fair!
Divine Oblivion of low-thoughted care!
Fresh blooming Hope, gay daughter of the sky!

And Faith, our early immortality!
Enter, each mild, each amicable guest;
Receive, and wrap me in eternal rest!

1717.

FROM

THE DUNCIAD

BOOK I

The mighty mother and her son, who brings
The Smithfield Muses to the ear of kings,
I sing. Say you, her instruments the great,
Called to this work by Dulness, Jove, and Fate,
You by whose care, in vain decried and cursed,
Still dunce the second reigns like dunce the first,
Say how the goddess bade Britannia sleep,
And poured her spirit o'er the land and deep.
In eldest time, ere mortals writ or read,
Ere Pallas issued from the Thund'rer's head,
Dulness o'er all possessed her ancient right,
Daughter of Chaos and eternal Night:
Fate, in their dotage, this fair idiot gave,
Gross as her sire, and as her mother grave;
Laborious, heavy, busy, bold, and blind,
She ruled in native anarchy the mind.
Still her old empire to restore she tries,
For, born a goddess, Dulness never dies.
Oh thou, whatever title please thine ear,
Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff, or Gulliver;
Whether thou choose Cervantes' serious air,
Or laugh and shake in Rab'lais' easy chair,
Or praise the court or magnify mankind,
Or thy grieved country's copper chains unbind;
From thy Boeotia though her pow'r retires,
Mourn not, my Swift, at aught our realm acquires;
Here, pleased, behold her mighty wings outspread
To hatch a new Saturnian age of lead.
Close to those walls where Folly holds her throne,
And laughs to think Monroe would take her down,
Where o'er the gates, by his famed father's hand,
Great Cibber's brazen brainless brothers stand,

One cell there is, concealed from vulgar eye,
The cave of Poverty and Poetry.
Keen hollow winds howl through the bleak recess,
Emblem of music caused by emptiness.
Hence bards, like Proteus long in vain tied down,
Escape in monsters, and amaze the town.
Hence Miscellanies spring, the weekly boast
Of Curll's chaste press and Lintot's rubric post;
Hence hymning Tyburn's elegiac lines;
Hence Journals, Medleys, Merc'ries, Magazines,
Sepulchral lies, our holy walls to grace,
And new-year odes, and all the Grub Street race.
In clouded majesty here Dulness shone.
Four guardian Virtues, round, support her throne:
Fierce champion Fortitude, that knows no fears
Of hisses, blows, or want, or loss of ears;
Calm Temperance, whose blessings those partake
Who hunger and who thirst for scribbling sake;
Prudence, whose glass presents th' approaching gaol;
Poetic Justice, with her lifted scale,
Where, in nice balance, truth with gold she weighs,
And solid pudding against empty praise.
Here she beholds the chaos dark and deep,
Where nameless somethings in their causes sleep,
Till genial Jacob or a warm third day
Call forth each mass, a poem or a play:
How hints, like spawn, scarce quick in embryo lie;
How new-born nonsense first is taught to cry;
Maggots, half formed, in rhyme exactly meet,
And learn to crawl upon poetic feet.
Here one poor word an hundred clenches makes,
And ductile Dulness new meanders takes;
There motley images her fancy strike,
Figures ill paired, and similes unlike.
She sees a mob of metaphors advance,
Pleased with the madness of the mazy dance;
How Tragedy and Comedy embrace;
How Farce and Epic get a jumbled race;
How Time himself stands still at her command,
Realms shift their place, and ocean turns to land,
Here gay description Egypt glads with show'rs,

Or gives to Zembla fruits, to Barca flow'rs;
Glitt'ring with ice here hoary hills are seen,
There painted valleys of eternal green;
In cold December fragrant chaplets blow,
And heavy harvests nod beneath the snow.
All these and more the cloud-compelling queen
Beholds through fogs, that magnify the scene:
She, tinseled o'er in robes of varying hues,
With self-applause her wild creation views;
Sees momentary monsters rise and fall,
And with her own fools-colours gilds them all.
'T was on the day, when * * rich and grave,
Like Cimon, triumphed both on land and wave
(Pomps without guilt, of bloodless swords and maces,
Glad chains, warm furs, broad banners, and broad faces).
Now night descending, the proud scene was o'er,
But lived in Settle's numbers one day more.
Now may'rs and shrieves all hushed and satiate lay,
Yet ate, in dreams, the custard of the day;
While pensive poets painful vigils keep,
Sleepless themselves to give their readers sleep.
Much to the mindful queen the feast recalls
What city swans once sung within the walls;
Much she revolves their arts, their ancient praise,
And sure succession down from Heywood's days.
She saw, with joy, the line immortal run,
Each sire impressed and glaring in his son;
So watchful bruin forms, with plastic care,
Each growing lump, and brings it to a bear.
She saw old Prynne in restless Daniel shine,
And Eusden eke out Blackmore's endless line;
She saw slow Philips creep like Tate's poor page,
And all the mighty mad in Dennis rage.
In each she marks her image full exprest,
But chief in Bayes's monster-breeding breast;
Bayes, formed by nature stage and town to bless,
And act, and be, a coxcomb with success.
Dulness with transport eyes the lively dunce,
Rememb'ring she herself was Pertness once.
Now (shame to Fortune!) an ill run at play
Blanked his bold visage, and a thin third day:

Swearing and supperless the hero sate,
Blasphemed his gods the dice, and damned his fate;
Then gnawed his pen, then dashed it on the ground,
Sinking from thought to thought, a vast profound;
Plunged for his sense, but found no bottom there;
Yet wrote and floundered on in mere despair.
Round him much embryo, much abortion lay,
Much future ode, and abdicated play;
Nonsense precipitate, like running lead,
That slipped through cracks and zigzags of the head;
All that on Folly Frenzy could beget,
Fruits of dull heat, and sooterkins of wit.
Next o'er his books his eyes began to roll,
In pleasing memory of all he stole—
How here he sipped, how there he plundered snug,
And sucked all o'er, like an industrious bug.
Here lay poor Fletcher's half-eat scenes, and here
The frippery of crucified Molière;
There hapless Shakespear, yet of Tibbald sore,
Wished he had blotted for himself before.
The rest on outside merit but presume,
Or serve (like other fools) to fill a room:
Such with their shelves as due proportion hold,
Or their fond parents dressed in red and gold;
Or where the pictures for the page atone,
And Quarles is saved by beauties not his own;
Here swells the shelf with Ogilby the great;
There, stamped with arms, Newcastle shines complete;
Here all his suff'ring brotherhood retire,
And 'scape the martyrdom of jakes and fire:
A Gothic library! of Greece and Rome
Well purged, and worthy Settle, Banks, and Broome.
But, high above, more solid learning shone,
The classics of an age that heard of none:
There Caxton slept, with Wynkyn at his side,
One clasped in wood, and one in strong cow-hide;
There, saved by spice, like mummies, many a year,
Dry bodies of divinity appear—
De Lyra there a dreadful front extends,
And here the groaning shelves Philemon bends.
Of these, twelve volumes, twelve of amplest size,

Redeemed from tapers and defrauded pies,
Inspired he seizes. These an altar raise;
A hecatomb of pure, unsullied lays
That altar crowns; a folio Commonplace
Founds the whole pile, of all his works the base;
Quartos, octavos, shape the less'ning pyre;
A twisted birthday ode completes the spire.
Then he: "Great tamer of all human art,
First in my care, and ever at my heart!
Dulness! whose good old cause I yet defend;
With whom my Muse began, with whom shall end,
E'er since Sir Fopling's periwig was praise,
To the last honours of the butt and bays;
O thou, of business the directing soul
To this our head, like bias to the bowl,
Which, as more pond'rous, made its aim more true,
Obliquely waddling to the mark in view;
Oh, ever gracious to perplexed mankind,
Still spread a healing mist before the mind,
And, lest we err by wit's wild dancing light,
Secure us kindly in our native night!
Or if to wit a coxcomb make pretence,
Guard the sure barrier between that and sense;
Or quite unravel all the reas'ning thread,
And hang some curious cobweb in its stead!
As, forced from wind-guns, lead itself can fly,
And pond'rous slugs cut swiftly through the sky;
As clocks to weight their nimble motion owe,
The wheels above urged by the load below;
Me emptiness and dulness could inspire,
And were my elasticity and fire.
Some demon stole my pen (forgive th' offence),
And once betrayed me into common sense;
Else all my prose and verse were much the same:
This, prose on stilts; that, poetry fall'n lame.
Did on the stage my fops appear confined?
My life gave ampler lessons to mankind.
Did the dead letter unsuccessful prove?
The brisk example never failed to move.
Yet sure, had Heav'n decreed to save the state,
Heav'n had decreed these works a longer date.

Could Troy be saved by any single hand,
This grey-goose weapon must have made her stand.
What can I now? My Fletcher cast aside,
Take up the Bible, once my better guide?
Or tread the path by vent'rous heroes trod,
This box my thunder, this right hand my god?
Or, chaired at White's, amidst the doctors sit,
Teach oaths to gamesters, and to nobles wit?
Or bidst thou rather party to embrace?
(A friend to party thou, and all her race;
'T is the same rope at diff'rent ends they twist.
To Dulness Ridpath is as dear as Mist.)
Shall I, like Curtius, desp'rate in my zeal,
O'er head and ears plunge for the commonweal?
Or rob Rome's ancient geese of all their glories,
And, cackling, save the monarchy of Tories?
Hold! to the minister I more incline;
To serve his cause, O Queen, is serving thine.
And see! thy very gazetteers give o'er;
Ev'n Ralph repents, and Henley writes no more.
What then remains! Ourself! Still, still remain
Cibberian forehead and Cibberian brain.
This brazen brightness, to the squire so dear;
This polished hardness, that reflects the peer;
This arch absurd, that wit and fool delights;
This mess, tossed up of Hockley Hole and White's,
Where dukes and butchers join to wreathe my crown,
At once the bear and fiddle of the town.
"O born in sin, and forth in folly brought!
Works damned or to be damned (your father's fault)!
Go; purified by flames, ascend the sky,
My better and more Christian progeny,
Unstained, untouched, and yet in maiden sheets,
While all your smutty sisters walk the streets.
Ye shall not beg, like gratis-given Bland,
Sent with a pass, and vagrant through the land;
Not sail with Ward, to ape-and-monkey climes,
Where vile Mundungus trucks for viler rhymes;
Not, sulphur-tipt, emblaze an ale-house fire;
Not wrap up oranges, to pelt your sire!
O, pass more innocent, in infant state,

To the mild limbo of our father Tate;
Or, peaceably forgot, at once be blest
In Shadwell's bosom with eternal rest;
Soon to that mass of nonsense to return,
Where things destroyed are swept to things unborn."
With that a tear (portentous sign of grace!)
Stole from the master of the sev'nfold face;
And thrice he lifted high the birthday brand,
And thrice he dropt it from his quiv'ring hand;
Then lights the structure, with averted eyes.
The rolling smoke involves the sacrifice;
The op'ning clouds disclose each work by turns:
Now flames the "Cid," and now "Perolla" burns;
Great "Cæsar" roars and hisses in the fires;
"King John" in silence modestly expires;
No merit now the dear "Nonjuror" claims—
Molière's old stubble in a moment flames.
Tears gushed again, as from pale Priam's eyes
When the last blaze sent Ilion to the skies.
Roused by the light, old Dulness heaved the head,
Then snatch'd a sheet of "Thulè" from her bed;
Sudden she flies, and whelms it o'er the pyre;
Down sink the flames, and with a hiss expire.
Her ample presence fills up all the place;
A veil of fogs dilates her awful face;
Great in her charms as when on shrieves and may'rs
She looks and breathes herself into their airs.
She bids him wait her to her sacred dome;
Well pleased he entered, and confessed his home:
So spirits, ending their terrestrial race,
Ascend, and recognize their native place.
This the great mother dearer held than all
The clubs of quidnuncs or her own Guild-hall;
Here stood her opium, here she nursed her owls,
And here she planned th' imperial seat of fools.
Here to her chosen all her works she shows:
Prose swelled to verse, verse loit'ring into prose;
How random thoughts now meaning chance to find,
Now leave all memory of sense behind;
How prologues into prefaces decay,
And these to notes are frittered quite away;

How index-learning turns no student pale,
Yet holds the eel of science by the tail;
How, with less reading than makes felons 'scape,
Less human genius than God gives an ape,
Small thanks to France and none to Rome or Greece,
A vast, vamped, future, old, revived, new piece,
'Twixt Plautus, Fletcher, Shakespear, and Corneille,
Can make a Cibber, Tibbald, or Ozell.

The goddess then, o'er his anointed head,
With mystic words, the sacred opium shed.
And lo! her bird (a monster of a fowl,
Something betwixt a heideggre and owl)
Perched on his crown. "All hail! and hail again,
My son! the promised land expects thy reign.
Know Eusden thirsts no more for sack or praise;
He sleeps among the dull of ancient days;
Safe, where no critics damn, no duns molest,
Where wretched Withers, Ward, and Gildon rest,
And high-born Howard, more majestic sire,
With fool of quality completes the quire.
Thou, Cibber, thou, his laurel shalt support;
Folly, my son, has still a friend at court.
Lift up your gates, ye princes, see him come!
Sound, sound, ye viols; be the cat-call dumb!
Bring, bring the madding bay, the drunken vine;
The creeping, dirty, courtly ivy join!
And thou, his aide-de-camp, lead on my sons,
Light-armed with points, antitheses, and puns.
Let Bawdry, Billingsgate, my daughters dear,
Support his front, and Oaths bring up the rear;
And under his, and under Archer's wing,
Gaming and Grub Street skulk behind the King.
Oh, when shall rise a monarch all our own,
And I, a nursing mother, rock the throne?
'Twixt prince and people close the curtain draw,
Shade him from light, and cover him from law?
Fatten the courtier, starve the learnèd band,
And suckle armies, and dry-nurse the land,
Till senates nod to lullabies divine,
And all be sleep, as at an ode of thine?"

She ceased. Then swells the chapel-royal throat:

"God save King Cibber!" mounts in ev'ry note.
Familiar White's "God save King Colley!" cries;
"God save King Colley!" Drury Lane replies.
To Needham's quick the voice triumphal rode,
But pious Needham dropt the name of God.
Back to the Devil the last echoes roll,
And "Coll!" each butcher roars at Hockley Hole.
So when Jove's block descended from on high
(As sings thy great forefather Ogilby),
Loud thunder to its bottom shook the bog,
And the hoarse nation croaked, "God save King Log!"

1726. 1728.

EPISTLE TO DR. ARBUTHNOT

P. Shut, shut the door, good John! fatigued, I said.
Tie up the knocker! say I'm sick, I'm dead.
The Dog-star rages! nay, 't is past a doubt
All Bedlam or Parnassus is let out.
Fire in each eye, and papers in each hand,
They rave, recite, and madden round the land.
What walls can guard me, or what shades can hide?
They pierce my thickets, through my grot they glide.
By land, by water, they renew the charge;
They stop the chariot, and they board the barge.
No place is sacred, not the church is free;
Ev'n Sunday shines no Sabbath day to me:
Then from the Mint walks forth the man of rhyme,
Happy to catch me just at dinner time.
Is there a parson much be-mused in beer,
A maudlin poetess, a rhyming peer,
A clerk, foredoomed his father's soul to cross,
Who pens a stanza when he should engross?
Is there who, locked from ink and paper, scrawls
With desp'rate charcoal round his darkened walls?
All fly to Twit'nam, and in humble strain
Apply to me to keep them mad or vain.
Arthur, whose giddy son neglects the laws,
Imputes to me and my damned works the cause.
Poor Cornus sees his frantic wife elope,
And curses wit, and poetry, and Pope.

Friend to my life (which did not you prolong,
The world had wanted many an idle song),
What drop or nostrum can this plague remove?
Or which must end me, a fool's wrath or love?
A dire dilemma! either way I'm sped:
If foes they write, if friends they read me, dead.
Seized and tied down to judge, how wretched I,
Who can't be silent and who will not lie:
To laugh were want of goodness and of grace,
And to be grave exceeds all power of face.
I sit with sad civility, I read
With honest anguish and an aching head,
And drop at last, but in unwilling ears,
This saving counsel: "Keep your piece nine years."
"Nine years!" cries he, who, high in Drury Lane,
Lulled by soft zephyrs through the broken pane,
Rhymes ere he wakes, and prints before Term ends,
Obliged by hunger and request of friends:
"The piece you think is incorrect? why, take it:
I'm all submission; what you'd have it, make it."
Three things another's modest wishes bound:
My friendship, and a prologue, and ten pound.
Pitholeon sends to me: "You know his Grace:
I want a patron; ask him for a place."
Pitholeon libelled me—"But here's a letter
Informs you, sir, 't was when he knew no better.
Dare you refuse him? Curll invites to dine;
He'll write a 'Journal,' or he'll turn divine."
Bless me! a packet: "'T is a stranger sues,
A virgin tragedy, an orphan Muse."
If I dislike it, "Furies, death, and rage!"
If I approve, "Commend it to the stage."
There (thank my stars) my whole commission ends;
The players and I are, luckily, no friends.
Fired that the house reject him, "'Sdeath I'll print it,
And shame the fools—your int'rest, sir, with Lintot."
"Lintot, dull rogue, will think your price too much."
"Not, sir, if you revise it and retouch."
All my demurs but double his attacks:
At last he whispers, "Do; and we go snacks."
Glad of a quarrel, straight I clap the door:

"Sir, let me see your works and you no more!"
'T is sung, when Midas' ears began to spring
(Midas, a sacred person and a king),
His very minister who spied them first
(Some say his queen) was forced to speak or burst.
And is not mine, my friend, a sorer case,
When every coxcomb perks them in my face?
A. Good friend, forbear! you deal in dangerous things;
I'd never name queens, ministers, or kings.
Keep close to ears, and those let asses prick;
'T is nothing——*P.* Nothing? if they bite and kick?
Out with it, "Dunciad!" let the secret pass,
That secret to each fool, that he's an ass.
The truth once told (and wherefore should we lie?),
The queen of Midas slept; and so may I.
You think this cruel? Take it for a rule,
No creature smarts so little as a fool.
Let peals of laughter, Codrus, round thee break,
Thou unconcerned canst hear the mighty crack;
Pit, box, and gall'ry in convulsions hurled,
Thou stand'st unshook amidst a bursting world.
Who shames a scribbler? break one cobweb through,
He spins the slight, self-pleasing thread anew:
Destroy his fib or sophistry—in vain!
The creature's at his dirty work again,
Throned in the center of his thin designs,
Proud of a vast extent of flimsy lines!
Whom have I hurt? has poet yet or peer
Lost the arched eyebrow or Parnassian sneer?...
Does not one table Bavius still admit?
Still to one bishop Philips seem a wit?
Still Sappho——*A.* Hold! for God's sake—you'll offend,
No names—be calm—learn prudence of a friend!
I too could write, and I am twice as tall;
But foes like these——*P.* One flatt'rer's worse than all.
Of all mad creatures, if the learn'd are right,
It is the slaver kills and not the bite.
A fool quite angry is quite innocent:
Alas! 't is ten times worse when they repent.
One dedicates in high heroic prose,
And ridicules beyond a hundred foes.

One from all Grub Street will my fame defend,
And, more abusive, calls himself my friend.
This prints my letters, that expects a bribe,
And others roar aloud, "Subscribe, subscribe!"
There are who to my person pay their court:
I cough like Horace, and though lean am short;
Ammon's great son one shoulder had too high;
Such Ovid's nose; and "Sir, you have an eye"—
Go on, obliging creatures; make me see
All that disgraced my betters met in me.
Say for my comfort, languishing in bed,
"Just so immortal Maro held his head";
And when I die, be sure you let me know
Great Homer died three thousand years ago.

Why did I write? what sin to me unknown
Dipped me in ink, my parents' or my own?
As yet a child, nor yet a fool to fame,
I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came.
I left no calling for this idle trade,
No duty broke, no father disobeyed;
The Muse but served to ease some friend, not wife,
To help me through this long disease, my life,
To second, Arbuthnot, thy art and care,
And teach the being you preserved to bear.

A. But why, then, publish? *P.* Granville the polite,
And knowing Walsh, would tell me I could write;
Well-natured Garth inflamed with early praise;
And Congreve loved and Swift endured my lays;
The courtly Talbot, Somers, Sheffield, read;
Ev'n mitred Rochester would nod the head,
And St. John's self (great Dryden's friends before)
With open arms received one poet more.
Happy my studies when by these approved!
Happier their author when by these beloved!
From these the world will judge of men and books,
Not from the Burnets, Oldmixons, and Cookes.

Soft were my numbers; who could take offence,
While pure description held the place of sense?
Like gentle Fanny's was my flow'ry theme,
A painted mistress or a purling stream.
Yet then did Gildon draw his venal quill;

I wish'd the man a dinner, and sate still.
Yet then did Dennis rave in furious fret;
I never answered—I was not in debt.
If want provoked, or madness made them print,
I waged no war with Bedlam or the Mint.
Did some more sober critic come abroad,
If wrong, I smiled; if right, I kissed the rod.
Pains, reading, study are their just pretence,
And all they want is spirit, taste, and sense.
Commas and points they set exactly right,
And 't were a sin to rob them of their mite.
Yet ne'er one sprig of laurel graced these ribalds,
From slashing Bentley down to piddling Tibbalds.
Each wight who reads not, and but scans and spells,
Each word-catcher that lives on syllables,
Ev'n such small critics some regard may claim,
Preserved in Milton's or in Shakspeare's name.
Pretty, in amber to observe the forms
Of hairs, or straws, or dirt, or grubs, or worms!
The things, we know, are neither rich nor rare,
But wonder how the devil they got there.
Were others angry, I excused them too:
Well might they rage; I gave them but their due.
A man's true merit 't is not hard to find;
But each man's secret standard in his mind,
That casting-weight pride adds to emptiness,
This who can gratify? for who can guess?
The bard whom pilfered pastorals renown,
Who turns a Persian tale for half a crown,
Just writes to make his barrenness appear,
And strains from hard-bound brains eight lines a year;
He who, still wanting though he lives on theft,
Steals much, spends little, yet has nothing left;
And he who, now to sense, now nonsense leaning,
Means not, but blunders round about a meaning;
And he whose fustian 's so sublimely bad
It is not poetry, but prose run mad;
All these my modest satire bade translate,
And owned that nine such poets made a Tate.
How did they fume, and stamp, and roar, and chafe,
And swear not Addison himself was safe.

Peace to all such! But were there one whose fires
True genius kindles and fair fame inspires,
Blest with each talent and each art to please,
And born to write, converse, and live with ease;
Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne,
View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
And hate for arts that caused himself to rise;
Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And without sneering teach the rest to sneer;
Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,
Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;
Alike reserved to blame or to commend,
A tim'rous foe and a suspicious friend;
Dreading e'en fools, by flatterers besieged,
And so obliging that he ne'er obliged;
Like Cato, give his little senate laws,
And sit attentive to his own applause,
While wits and Templars ev'ry sentence raise
And wonder with a foolish face of praise;—
Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?
Who would not weep, if Atticus were he?
What though my name stood rubric on the walls,
Or plastered posts, ... in capitals?
Or smoking forth, a hundred hawkers' load,
On wings of winds came flying all abroad?
I sought no homage from the race that write;
I kept, like Asian monarchs, from their sight.
Poems I heeded (now be-rhymed so long)
No more than thou, great George, a birthday song.
I ne'er with wits or witlings passed my days,
To spread about the itch of verse and praise;
Nor, like a puppy, daggled through the town
To fetch and carry sing-song up and down;
Nor at rehearsals sweat and mouthed and cried,
With handkerchief and orange at my side;
But, sick of fops, and poetry, and prate,
To Bufo left the whole Castalian state.
Proud as Apollo on his forkèd hill,
Sat full-blown Bufo, puffed by every quill;
Fed with soft dedication all day long,

Horace and he went hand in hand in song.
His library (where busts of poets dead
And a true Pindar stood without a head)
Received of wits an undistinguished race,
Who first his judgment asked and then a place.
Much they extolled his pictures, much his seat,
And flattered ev'ry day, and some days eat;
Till, grown more frugal in his riper days,
He paid some bards with port and some with praise,
To some a dry rehearsal was assigned,
And others (harder still) he paid in kind.
Dryden alone (what wonder?) came not nigh;
Dryden alone escaped this judging eye:
But still the great have kindness in reserve;
He helped to bury whom he helped to starve.
May some choice patron bless each grey goose quill!
May every Bavius have his Bufo still!
So, when a statesman wants a day's defence,
Or envy holds a whole week's war with sense,
Or simple pride for flatt'ry makes demands,
May dunce by dunce be whistled off my hands!
Blest be the great for those they take away,
And those they left me—for they left me Gay;
Left me to see neglected genius bloom,
Neglected die, and tell it on his tomb:
Of all thy blameless life the sole return,
My verse and Queensb'ry weeping o'er thy urn!
Oh, let me live my own and die so too
(To live and die is all I have to do!),
Maintain a poet's dignity and ease,
And see what friends and read what books I please;
Above a patron, though I condescend
Sometimes to call a minister my friend.
I was not born for courts or great affairs;
I pay my debts, believe, and say my prayers;
Can sleep without a poem in my head;
Nor know if Dennis be alive or dead.
Why am I asked what next shall see the light?
Heav'ns! was I born for nothing but to write?
Has life no joys for me? or (to be grave)
Have I no friend to serve, no soul to save?

"I found him close with Swift." "Indeed? no doubt,"
Cries prating Balbus, "something will come out."
'T is all in vain, deny it as I will:
"No, such a genius never can lie still;"
And then for mine obligingly mistakes
The first lampoon Sir Will or Bubo makes.
Poor guiltless I! and can I choose but smile,
When ev'ry coxcomb knows me by my style?
Cursed be the verse, how well soe'er it flow,
That tends to make one worthy man my foe,
Give virtue scandal, innocence a fear,
Or from the soft-eyed virgin steal a tear!
But he who hurts a harmless neighbour's peace,
Insults fall'n worth or beauty in distress,
Who loves a lie, lame slander helps about,
Who writes a libel or who copies out;
That fop whose pride affects a patron's name,
Yet, absent, wounds an author's honest fame;
Who can your merit selfishly approve,
And show the sense of it without the love;
Who has the vanity to call you friend,
Yet wants the honour, injured, to defend;
Who tells whate'er you think, whate'er you say,
And, if he lie not, must at least betray;
Who to the dean and silver bell can swear,
And sees at Canons what was never there;
Who reads but with a lust to misapply,
Make satire a lampoon, and fiction, lie;—
A lash like mine no honest man shall dread,
But all such babbling blockheads in his stead.
Let Sporus tremble——*A.* What? that thing of silk,
Sporus, that mere white curd of ass's milk?
Satire or sense, alas! can Sporus feel?
Who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel?
P. Yet let me flap this bug with gilded wings,
This painted child of dirt, that stinks and stings;
Whose buzz the witty and the fair annoys,
Yet wit ne'er tastes and beauty ne'er enjoys:
So well-bred spaniels civilly delight
In mumbling of the game they dare not bite.
Eternal smiles his emptiness betray,

As shallow streams run dimpling all the way,
Whether in florid impotence he speaks,
And, as the prompter breathes, the puppet squeaks;
Or at the ear of Eve, familiar toad,
Half froth, half venom, spits himself abroad,
In puns, or politics, or tales, or lies,
Or spite, or smut, or rhymes, or blasphemies;
His wit all see-saw, between that and this,
Now high, now low, now master up, now miss,
And he himself one vile antithesis.
Amphibious thing! that, acting either part,
The trifling head or the corrupted heart,
Fop at the toilet, flatt'rer at the board,
Now trips, a lady, and now struts, a lord.
Eve's tempter thus the rabbins have exprest:
A cherub's face, a reptile all the rest;
Beauty that shocks you, parts that none will trust,
Wit that can creep, and pride that licks the dust.
Not Fortune's worshipper, nor Fashion's fool,
Not Lucre's madman, nor Ambition's tool,
Not proud nor servile, be one poet's praise
That, if he pleased, he pleased by manly ways;
That flatt'ry, ev'n to kings, he held a shame,
And thought a lie in verse or prose the same;
That not in fancy's maze he wandered long,
But stooped to truth and moralized his song;
That not for fame, but virtue's better end,
He stood the furious foe, the timid friend,
The damning critic, half approving wit,
The coxcomb hit or fearing to be hit;
Laughed at the loss of friends he never had,
The dull, the proud, the wicked, and the mad;
The distant threats of vengeance on his head,
The blow unfelt, the tear he never shed;
The tale revived, the lie so oft o'erthrown,
Th' imputed trash, and dullness not his own;
The morals blackened when the writings 'scape,
The libelled person, and the pictured shape;
Abuse, on all he loved or loved him, spread,
A friend in exile or a father dead;
The whisper that, to greatness still too near,

Perhaps yet vibrates on his Sov'reign's ear—
Welcome for thee, fair Virtue, all the past!
For thee, fair Virtue, welcome e'en the last!
A. But why insult the poor, affront the great?
P. A knave's a knave, to me, in ev'ry state:
Alike my scorn, if he succeed or fail;
Sporus at Court, or Japhet in a jail;
A hireling scribbler, or a hireling peer,
Knight of the post corrupt, or of the shire;
If on a pillory, or near a throne,
He gain his prince's ear, or lose his own.
Yet, soft by nature, more a dupe than wit,
Sappho can tell you how this man was bit;
This dreaded satirist Dennis will confess
Foe to his pride, but friend to his distress;
So humble he has knocked at Tibbald's door,
Has drunk with Cibber, nay has rhymed for Moore.
Full ten years slandered, did he once reply?
Three thousand suns went down on Welsted's lie.
To please a mistress one aspersed his life;
He lashed him not, but let her be his wife:
Let Budgell charge low Grub Street on his quill,
And write whate'er he pleased, except his will.
Let the two Curlls, of town and court, abuse
His father, mother, body, soul, and Muse—
Yet why? that father held it for a rule,
It was a sin to call our neighbour fool; . . . .
Hear this, and spare his family, James Moore!
Unspotted names and memorable long,
If there be force in virtue or in song.
Of gentle blood (part shed in honour's cause,
While yet in Britain honour had applause)
Each parent sprung——*A.* What fortune, pray? *P.* Their own,
And better got than Bestia's from the throne.
Born to no pride, inheriting no strife,
Nor marrying discord in a noble wife,
Stranger to civil and religious rage,
The good man walked innoxious through his age.
No courts he saw, no suits would ever try,
Nor dared an oath, nor hazarded a lie.

Unlearn'd, he knew no schoolman's subtle art,
No language but the language of the heart.
By nature honest, by experience wise,
Healthy by temp'rance and by exercise;
His life, though long, to sickness passed unknown;
His death was instant, and without a groan.
O grant me thus to live and thus to die;
Who sprung from kings shall know less joy than I.
O friend, may each domestic bliss be thine!
Be no unpleasing melancholy mine:
Me let the tender office long engage,
To rock the cradle of reposing age,
With lenient arts extend a mother's breath,
Make languor smile, and smooth the bed of death,
Explore the thought, explain the asking eye,
And keep awhile one parent from the sky!
On cares like these if length of days attend,
May Heav'n, to bless those days, preserve my friend;
Preserve him social, cheerful, and serene,
And just as rich as when he served a queen!
A. Whether that blessing be denied or giv'n,
Thus far was right; the rest belongs to Heav'n.

1715?–34. 1735.

FROM

AN ESSAY ON MAN

EPISTLE I

Awake, my St. John! leave all meaner things
To low ambition and the pride of kings.
Let us, since life can little more supply
Than just to look about us and to die,
Expatiate free o'er all this scene of man:
A mighty maze, but not without a plan,
A wild where weeds and flow'rs promiscuous shoot,
Or garden tempting with forbidden fruit.
Together let us beat this ample field,
Try what the open, what the covert yield;
The latent tracts, the giddy heights explore
Of all who blindly creep or sightless soar;

Eye Nature's walks, shoot folly as it flies,
And catch the manners living as they rise;
Laugh where we must, be candid where we can;
But vindicate the ways of God to man.

I. Say first, of God above or man below
What can we reason but from what we know?
Of man what see we but his station here
From which to reason or to which refer?
Through worlds unnumbered though the God be known,
'T is ours to trace Him only in our own.
He who through vast immensity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs,
What other planets circle other suns,
What varied being peoples every star,
May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.
But of this frame the bearings and the ties,
The strong connections, nice dependencies,
Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
Looked through? or can a part contain the whole?
Is the great chain, that draws all to agree,
And drawn supports, upheld by God or thee?

II. Presumptuous man! the reason wouldst thou find
Why formed so weak, so little, and so blind?
First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,
Why formed no weaker, blinder, and no less?
Ask of thy mother earth why oaks are made
Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade?
Or ask of yonder argent fields above
Why Jove's satellites are less than Jove.

Of systems possible if 't is confessed
That Wisdom Infinite must form the best,
Where all must full or not coherent be,
And all that rises, rise in due degree,
Then, in the scale of reas'ning life, 't is plain
There must be, somewhere, such a rank as man;
And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)
Is only this—if God has placed him wrong?

Respecting man whatever wrong we call,
May, must be right as relative to all.
In human works, though laboured on with pain,

A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;
In God's one single can its end produce,
Yet serves to second too some other use:
So man, who here seems principal alone,
Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,
Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;
'T is but a part we see, and not a whole.

When the proud steed shall know why man restrains
His fiery course or drives him o'er the plains;
When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,
Is now a victim, and now Egypt's god;
Then shall man's pride and dullness comprehend
His actions', passions', being's use and end;
Why doing, suff'ring, checked, impelled; and why
This hour a slave, the next a deity.

Then say not man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault;
Say rather man's as perfect as he ought;
His knowledge measured to his state and place;
His time a moment, and a point his space.
If to be perfect in a certain sphere,
What matter soon or late, or here or there?
The blest to-day is as completely so
As who began a thousand years ago.

III. Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of Fate;
All but the page prescribed, their present state:
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know;
Or who could suffer being here below?
The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
Had he thy reason, would he skip and play?
Pleased to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,
And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.
Oh, blindness to the future! kindly giv'n,
That each may fill the circle marked by Heav'n,
Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish or a sparrow fall,
Atoms or systems into ruin hurled,
And now a bubble burst and now a world.

Hope humbly, then; with trembling pinions soar;
Wait the great teacher Death; and God adore.
What future bliss, He gives not thee to know,
But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.

Hope springs eternal in the human breast:
Man never is but always to be blest;
The soul, uneasy and confined from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.
Lo, the poor Indian, whose untutored mind
Sees God in clouds or hears Him in the wind!
His soul proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk or milky way;
Yet simple Nature to his hope has giv'n,
Behind the cloud-topped hill, an humbler Heav'n;
Some safer world in depth of woods embraced,
Some happier island in the wat'ry waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.
To be, contents his natural desire;
He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire,
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company.
IV. Go, wiser thou! and, in thy scale of sense,
Weigh thy opinion against Providence.
Call imperfection what thou fanci'st such;
Say, "Here He gives too little, there too much";
Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,
Yet cry, "If man's unhappy, God's unjust";
If man alone engross not Heav'n's high care,
Alone made perfect here, immortal there,
Snatch from His hand the balance and the rod,
Re-judge His justice, be the god of God.
In pride, in reas'ning pride, our error lies;
All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.
Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes;
Men would be angels, angels would be gods.
Aspiring to be gods if angels fell,
Aspiring to be angels men rebel;
And who but wishes to invert the laws
Of order sins against th' Eternal Cause.
V. Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine,
Earth for whose use, Pride answers, "'T is for mine:
For me kind Nature wakes her genial pow'r,
Suckles each herb, and spreads out ev'ry flow'r;

Annual for me the grape, the rose, renew
The juice nectareous and the balmy dew;
For me the mine a thousand treasures brings;
For me health gushes from a thousand springs;
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;
My footstool earth, my canopy the skies."
But errs not Nature from this gracious end,
From burning suns when livid deaths descend,
When earthquakes swallow or when tempests sweep
Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?
"No," 't is replied, "the first Almighty Cause
Acts not by partial but by gen'ral laws;
Th' exceptions few; some change, since all began,
And what created perfect?" Why then man?
If the great end be human happiness,
Then Nature deviates; and can man do less?
As much that end a constant course requires
Of show'rs and sunshine as of man's desires;
As much eternal springs and cloudless skies
As men forever temp'rate, calm, and wise.
If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's design,
Why then a Borgia or a Catiline?
Who knows but He Whose hand the lightning forms,
Who heaves old ocean, and Who wings the storms,
Pours fierce ambition in a Cæsar's mind,
Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind?
From pride, from pride, our very reas'ning springs.
Account for moral as for nat'ral things:
Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these acquit?
In both to reason right is to submit.
Better for us, perhaps, it might appear,
Were there all harmony, all virtue, here;
That never air or ocean felt the wind,
That never passion discomposed the mind.
But all subsists by elemental strife,
And passions are the elements of life.
The gen'ral order, since the whole began,
Is kept in Nature and is kept in man.

VI. What would this man? Now upward will he soar,
And, little less than angel, would be more;

Now, looking downwards, just as grieved appears
To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.
Made for his use all creatures if he call;
Say what their use, had he the pow'rs of all?
Nature to these, without profusion kind,
The proper organs, proper pow'rs assigned;
Each seeming want compensated of course,
Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force;
All in exact proportion to the state;
Nothing to add, and nothing to abate.
Each beast, each insect, happy in its own,
Is Heav'n unkind to man, and man alone?
Shall he alone whom rational we call
Be pleased with nothing if not blest with all?
The bliss of man (could pride that blessing find)
Is not to act or think beyond mankind;
No pow'rs of body or of soul to share,
But what his nature and his state can bear.
Why has not man a microscopic eye?
For this plain reason, man is not a fly.
Say what the use, were finer optics giv'n,
T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n?
Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,
To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore?
Or, quick effluvia darting through the brain,
Die of a rose in aromatic pain?
If Nature thundered in his op'ning ears,
And stunned him with the music of the spheres,
How would he wish that Heav'n had left him still
The whisp'ring zephyr and the purling rill?
Who finds not Providence all good and wise,
Alike in what it gives and what denies?
VII. Far as Creation's ample range extends,
The scale of sensual, mental pow'rs ascends.
Mark how it mounts to man's imperial race
From the green myriads in the peopled grass;
What modes of sight betwixt each wide extreme,
The mole's dim curtain and the lynx's beam;
Of smell, the headlong lioness between,
And hound sagacious on the tainted green;

Of hearing, from the life that fills the flood
To that which warbles through the vernal wood.
The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine,
Feels at each thread and lives along the line.
In the nice bee what sense so subtly true
From pois'nous herbs extracts the healing dew?
How instinct varies in the grov'lling swine,
Compared, half-reas'ning elephant, with thine!
'Twixt that and reason what a nice barrier,
Forever sep'rate yet forever near!
Remembrance and reflection, how allied;
What thin partitions sense from thought divide.
And middle natures, how they long to join,
Yet never pass th' insuperable line!
Without this just gradation, could they be
Subjected, these to those, or all to thee?
The pow'rs of all subdued by thee alone,
Is not thy reason all these pow'rs in one?

VIII. See through this air, this ocean, and this earth
All matter quick and bursting into birth.
Above, how high progressive life may go!
Around, how wide! how deep extend below!
Vast chain of being! which from God began;
Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,
Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,
No glass can reach; from infinite to thee,
From thee to nothing. On superior pow'rs
Were we to press, inferior might on ours;
Or in the full creation leave a void,
Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroyed:
From Nature's chain whatever link you strike,
Tenth or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

And if each system in gradation roll,
Alike essential to th' amazing whole,
The least confusion but in one, not all
That system only but the whole must fall.
Let earth unbalanced from her orbit fly,
Planets and suns run lawless through the sky;
Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurled,
Being on being wrecked and world on world;

Heav'n's whole foundations to their center nod,
And Nature tremble to the throne of God.
All this dread order break—for whom? for thee?
Vile worm! Oh, madness! pride! impiety!

IX. What if the foot, ordained the dust to tread,
Or hand to toil, aspired to be the head?
What if the head, the eye, or ear repined
To serve mere engines to the ruling mind?
Just as absurd for any part to claim
To be another in this gen'ral frame;
Just as absurd to mourn the tasks or pains
The great directing Mind of all ordains.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;
That, changed through all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth as in th' ethereal frame,
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent,
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart,
As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns
As the rapt seraph that adores and burns:
To Him no high, no low, no great, no small;
He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all.

X. Cease, then, nor order imperfection name;
Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.
Know thy own point: this kind, this due degree
Of blindness, weakness, Heav'n bestows on thee.
Submit: in this or any other sphere,
Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear;
Safe in the hand of one disposing Pow'r,
Or in the natal or the mortal hour.
All Nature is but Art unknown to thee;
All chance, direction which thou canst not see;
All discord, harmony not understood;
All partial evil, universal good:
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear—Whatever is, is right.

1732. 1733.

MORAL ESSAYS

FROM

EPISTLE II

To a Lady

Of the Characters of Women

Nothing so true as what you once let fall,
"Most women have no characters at all";
Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,
And best distinguished by black, brown, or fair.
How many pictures of one nymph we view,
All how unlike each other, all how true!
Arcadia's countess here, in ermined pride,
Is there Pastora by a fountain side;
Here Fannia, leering on her own good man,
And there a naked Leda with a swan.
Let, then, the fair one beautifully cry
In Magdalen's loose hair and lifted eye,
Or, dressed in smiles of sweet Cecilia, shine
With simp'ring angels, palms, and harps divine;
Whether the charmer sinner it or saint it,
If folly grow romantic I must paint it.
Come, then, the colours and the ground prepare!
Dip in the rainbow, trick her off in air;
Choose a firm cloud, before it fall, and in it
Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute.
Rufa, whose eye, quick-glancing o'er the park,
Attracts each light gay meteor of a spark,
Agrees as ill with Rufa studying Locke
As Sappho's diamonds with her dirty smock;
Or Sappho at her toilet's greasy task,
With Sappho fragrant at an evening masque:
So morning insects that in muck begun
Shine, buzz, and fly-blow in the setting sun.
How soft is Silia! fearful to offend,
The frail one's advocate, the weak one's friend:
To her Calista proved her conduct nice,
And good Simplicius asks of her advice.
Sudden, she storms! she raves! You tip the wink,
But spare your censure; Silia does not drink:

All eyes may see from what the change arose,
All eyes may see—a pimple on her nose.
Papillia, wedded to her am'rous spark,
Sighs for the shades—"How charming is a park!"
A park is purchased; but the fair he sees
All bathed in tears—"Oh, odious, odious trees!"
Ladies like variegated tulips show:
'T is to their changes half their charms we owe;
Fine by defect, and delicately weak,
Their happy spots the nice admirer take.
'T was thus Calypso once each heart alarmed,
Awed without virtue, without beauty charmed;
Her tongue bewitched as oddly as her eyes,
Less wit than mimic, more a wit than wise;
Strange graces still and stranger flights she had—
Was just not ugly, and was just not mad;
Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create
As when she touched the brink of all we hate.
Narcissa's nature, tolerably mild,
To make a wash would hardly stew a child;
Has ev'n been proved to grant a lover's pray'r,
And paid a tradesman once to make him stare;
Gave alms at Easter, in a Christian trim,
And made a widow happy, for a whim.
Why, then, declare good nature is her scorn,
When 't is by that alone she can be borne?
Why pique all mortals, yet affect a name?
A fool to pleasure, yet a slave to fame:
Now deep in Taylor and the "Book of Martyrs,"
Now drinking citron with his Grace and Chartres;
Now conscience chills her, and now passion burns,
And atheism and religion take their turns;
A very heathen in the carnal part,
Yet still a sad, good Christian at her heart.

. . . . . .

But what are these to great Atossa's mind?
Scarce once herself, by turns all womankind!
Who, with herself or others, from her birth
Finds all her life one warfare upon earth;
Shines in exposing knaves and painting fools,
Yet is whate'er she hates and ridicules;
No thought advances, but her eddy brain

Whisks it about, and down it goes again.
Full sixty years the world has been her trade,
The wisest fool much time has ever made;
From loveless youth to unrespected age,
No passion gratified except her rage;
So much the fury still outran the wit,
The pleasure missed her, and the scandal hit.
Who breaks with her provokes revenge from hell,
But he 's a bolder man who dares be well:
Her ev'ry turn with violence pursued,
Nor more a storm her hate than gratitude;
To that each passion turns, or soon or late;
Love, if it makes her yield, must make her hate.
Superiors? death! and equals? what a curse!
But an inferior not dependent? worse.
Offend her, and she knows not to forgive;
Oblige her, and she 'll hate you while you live;
But die, and she 'll adore you—then the bust
And temple rise—then fall again to dust.
Last night her lord was all that 's good and great;
A knave this morning, and his will a cheat.
Strange! by the means defeated of the ends,
By spirit robbed of pow'r, by warmth of friends,
By wealth of foll'wers! without one distress,
Sick of herself through very selfishness!
Atossa, curst with every granted pray'r,
Childless with all her children, wants an heir:
To heirs unknown descends th' unguarded store,
Or wanders, Heav'n-directed, to the poor.

. . . . . .

Ah, friend! to dazzle let the vain design;
To raise the thought and touch the heart be thine!
That charm shall grow, while what fatigues the Ring
Flaunts and goes down, an unregarded thing:
So when the sun's broad beam has tired the sight,
All mild ascends the moon's more sober light;
Serene in virgin modesty she shines,
And unobserved the glaring orb declines.
Oh, blest with temper whose unclouded ray
Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day;
She who can love a sister's charms, or hear
Sighs for a daughter with unwounded ear;

She who ne'er answers till a husband cools,
Or, if she rules him, never shows she rules;
Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
Yet has her humour most when she obeys;
Let fops or fortune fly which way they will,
Disdains all loss of tickets or codille;
Spleen, vapours, or small-pox, above them all,
And mistress of herself though china fall.
And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,
Woman's at best a contradiction still.
Heav'n, when it strives to polish all it can
Its last best work, but forms a softer man;
Picks from each sex, to make the fav'rite blest,
Your love of pleasure, our desire of rest;
Blends, in exception to all gen'ral rules,
Your taste of follies with our scorn of fools,
Reserve with frankness, art with truth allied,
Courage with softness, modesty with pride,
Fixed principles with fancy ever new;
Shakes all together, and produces—You.
Be this a woman's fame; with this unblest,
Toasts live a scorn, and queens may die a jest.
This Phœbus promised (I forget the year)
When those blue eyes first opened on the sphere;
Ascendant Phœbus watched that hour with care,
Averted half your parents' simple pray'r,
And gave you beauty, but denied the pelf
That buys your sex a tyrant o'er itself.
The gen'rous god, who wit and gold refines,
And ripens spirits as he ripens mines,
Kept dross for duchesses—the world shall know it,—
To you gave sense, good humour, and a poet.

1732–33. 1735.

SATIRES AND EPISTLES OF HORACE IMITATED

FROM

TO AUGUSTUS

Shakespear (whom you and ev'ry play-house bill
Style the divine, the matchless, what you will)
For gain, not glory, winged his roving flight,

And grew immortal in his own despite.
Ben, old and poor, as little seemed to heed
The life to come, in ev'ry poet's creed.
Who now reads Cowley? if he pleases yet,
His moral pleases, not his pointed wit;
Forgot his epic, nay Pindaric art,
But still I love the language of his heart.
"Yet surely, surely, these were famous men!
What boy but hears the sayings of old Ben?
In all debates where critics bear a part,
Not one but nods, and talks of Jonson's art,
Of Shakespear's nature, and of Cowley's wit;
How Beaumont's judgment checked what Fletcher writ;
How Shadwell hasty, Wycherley was slow,
But for the passions, Southern sure and Rowe.
These, only these, support the crowded stage,
From eldest Heywood down to Cibber's age."
All this may be: the people's voice is odd;
It is, and it is not, the voice of God.
To "Gammer Gurton" if it give the bays,
And yet deny the "Careless Husband" praise,
Or say our fathers never broke a rule,
Why then, I say, the public is a fool;
But let them own that greater faults than we
They had, and greater virtues, I 'll agree.
Spenser himself affects the obsolete,
And Sidney's verse halts ill on Roman feet.
Milton's strong pinion now not Heav'n can bound,
Now, serpent-like, in prose he sweeps the ground;
In quibbles angel and archangel join,
And God the Father turns a school-divine:
Not that I 'd lop the beauties from his book,
Like slashing Bentley with his desp'rate hook,
Or damn all Shakespear, like th' affected fool
At court, who hates whate'er he read at school.
But for the wits of either Charles's days,
The mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease,
Sprat, Carew, Sedley, and a hundred more
(Like twinkling stars the Miscellanies o'er),
One simile that solitary shines
In the dry desert of a thousand lines,

Or lengthened thought that gleams through many a page,
Has sanctified whole poems for an age.
I lose my patience, and I own it too,
When works are censured, not as bad, but new;
While if our elders break all Reason's laws,
These fools demand, not pardon, but applause.
On Avon's bank, where flow'rs eternal blow,
If I but ask if any weed can grow;
One tragic sentence if I dare deride,
Which Betterton's grave action dignified,
Or well-mouthed Booth with emphasis proclaims
(Though but, perhaps, a muster-roll of names),
How will our fathers rise up in a rage,
And swear all shame is lost in George's age!
You'd think no fools disgraced the former reign,
Did not some grave examples yet remain,
Who scorn a lad should teach his father skill,
And, having once been wrong, will be so still.
He who, to seem more deep than you or I,
Extols old bards or "Merlin's Prophecy,"
Mistake him not; he envies, not admires,
And to debase the sons exalts the sires.
Had ancient times conspired to disallow
What then was new, what had been ancient now?
Or what remained, so worthy to be read
By learnèd critics, of the mighty dead?

1737. 1737.

THOMAS PARNELL

A HYMN TO CONTENTMENT

"Lovely, lasting peace of mind,
Sweet delight of human-kind,
Heavenly born and bred on high,
To crown the fav'rites of the sky
With more of happiness below
Than victors in a triumph know,
Whither, O whither art thou fled,
To lay thy meek, contented head?

What happy region dost thou please
To make the seat of calms and ease?
Ambition searches all its sphere
Of pomp and state, to meet thee there.
Encreasing avarice would find
Thy presence in its gold enshrined.
The bold advent'rer ploughs his way
Through rocks amidst the foaming sea,
To gain thy love, and then perceives
Thou wert not in the rocks and waves.
The silent heart which grief assails
Treads soft and lonesome o'er the vales,
Sees daisies open, rivers run,
And seeks, as I have vainly done,
Amusing thought, but learns to know
That solitude's the nurse of woe.
No real happiness is found
In trailing purple o'er the ground;
Or in a soul exalted high
To range the circuit of the sky,
Converse with stars above, and know
All Nature in its forms below—
The rest it seeks, in seeking dies,
And doubts at last, for knowledge, rise.
Lovely, lasting peace, appear!
This world itself, if thou art here,
Is once again with Eden blest,
And man contains it in his breast."
'T was thus, as under shade I stood,
I sung my wishes to the wood,
And, lost in thought, no more perceived
The branches whisper as they waved;
It seemed as all the quiet place
Confessed the presence of the Grace;
When thus she spoke: "Go rule thy will;
Bid thy wild passions all be still;
Know God, and bring thy heart to know
The joys which from religion flow:
Then ev'ry Grace shall prove its guest,
And I 'll be there to crown the rest."
Oh, by yonder mossy seat,

In my hours of sweet retreat,
Might I thus my soul employ
With sense of gratitude and joy,
Raised, as ancient prophets were,
In heavenly vision, praise, and pray'r,
Pleasing all men, hurting none,
Pleased and blest with God alone!
Then, while the gardens take my sight
With all the colours of delight,
While silver waters glide along,
To please my ear and court my song,
I'll lift my voice, and tune my string,
And Thee, great Source of Nature, sing.
The sun, that walks his airy way
To light the world and give the day;
The moon, that shines with borrowed light;
The stars, that gild the gloomy night;
The seas, that roll unnumbered waves:
The wood, that spreads its shady leaves;
The field, whose ears conceal the grain,
The yellow treasure of the plain;
All of these, and all I see,
Should be sung, and sung by me:
They speak their Maker as they can,
But want and ask the tongue of man.
Go search among your idle dreams,
Your busy or your vain extrêmes,
And find a life of equal bliss,
Or own the next begun in this.

1721.

A NIGHT-PIECE ON DEATH

By the blue taper's trembling light,
No more I waste the wakeful night,
Intent with endless view to pore
The schoolmen and the sages o'er:
Their books from wisdom widely stray,
Or point at best the longest way;
I'll seek a readier path, and go
Where wisdom's surely taught below.

How deep yon azure dyes the sky,
Where orbs of gold unnumbered lie,
While through their ranks in silver pride
The nether crescent seems to glide!
The slumb'ring breeze forgets to breathe;
The lake is smooth and clear beneath,
Where once again the spangled show
Descends to meet our eyes below.
The grounds which on the right aspire
In dimness from the view retire;
The left presents a place of graves,
Whose wall the silent water laves;
That steeple guides thy doubtful sight
Among the livid gleams of night;
There pass, with melancholy state,
By all the solemn heaps of Fate,
And think, as softly-sad you tread
Above the venerable dead,
"Time was, like thee they life possessed,
And time shall be that thou shalt rest."
Those graves, with bending osier bound,
That nameless heave the crumbled ground,
Quick to the glancing thought disclose
Where Toil and Poverty repose.
The flat smooth-stones that bear a name,
The chisel's slender help to fame
(Which ere our set of friends decay
Their frequent steps may wear away),
A middle race of mortals own,
Men half ambitious, all unknown.
The marble tombs that rise on high,
Whose dead in vaulted arches lie,
Whose pillars swell with sculptured stones—
Arms, angels, epitaphs, and bones,—
These, all the poor remains of state,
Adorn the rich or praise the great,
Who, while on earth in fame they live,
Are senseless of the fame they give.
Ha! while I gaze, pale Cynthia fades;
The bursting earth unveils the shades!
All slow, and wan, and wrapped with shrouds,

They rise in visionary crowds,
And all with sober accent cry,
"Think, mortal, what it is to die!"
Now from yon black and fun'ral yew,
That bathes the charnel-house with dew,
Methinks I hear a voice begin
(Ye ravens, cease your croaking din!
Ye tolling clocks, no time resound
O'er the long lake and midnight ground!);
It sends a peal of hollow groans,
Thus speaking from among the bones:
"When men my scythe and darts supply,
How great a King of Fears am I!
They view me like the last of things:
They make, and then they dread, my stings.
Fools! if you less provoked your fears,
No more my spectre-form appears.
Death's but a path that must be trod,
If man would ever pass to God;
A port of calms, a state of ease
From the rough rage of swelling seas.
Why, then, thy flowing sable stoles,
Deep pendant cypress, mourning poles,
Loose scarfs to fall athwart thy weeds,
Long palls, drawn hearses, covered steeds,
And plumes of black, that, as they tread,
Nod o'er the 'scutcheons of the dead?
Nor can the parted body know,
Nor wants the soul, these forms of woe:
As men who long in prison dwell,
With lamps that glimmer round the cell,
Whene'er their suffering years are run,
Spring forth to greet the glitt'ring sun,
Such joy, though far transcending sense,
Have pious souls at parting hence;
On earth, and in the body placed,
A few and evil years they waste,
But, when their chains are cast aside,
See the glad scene unfolding wide,
Clap the glad wing, and tow'r away,
And mingle with the blaze of day.

1721.

THE HERMIT

Far in a wild, unknown to public view,
From youth to age a rev'rend hermit grew;
The moss his bed, the cave his humble cell,
His food the fruits, his drink the crystal well:
Remote from man, with God he passed the days,
Pray'r all his business, all his pleasure praise.
A life so sacred, such serene repose,
Seemed heav'n itself till one suggestion rose;
That vice should triumph, virtue vice obey,
This sprung some doubt of Providence's sway:
His hopes no more a certain prospect boast,
And all the tenour of his soul is lost.
So when a smooth expanse receives imprest
Calm Nature's image on its wat'ry breast,
Down bend the banks, the trees depending grow,
And skies beneath with answ'ring colours glow;
But if a stone the gentle scene divide,
Swift ruffling circles curl on ev'ry side,
And glimmering fragments of a broken sun,
Banks, trees, and skies, in thick disorder run.
To clear this doubt, to know the world by sight,
To find if books or swains report it right
(For yet by swains alone the world he knew,
Whose feet came wand'ring o'er the nightly dew),
He quits his cell: the pilgrim-staff he bore,
And fixed the scallop in his hat before;
Then with the sun a rising journey went,
Sedate to think and watching each event.

The morn was wasted in the pathless grass,
And long and lonesome was the wild to pass;
But when the southern sun had warmed the day,
A youth came posting o'er a crossing way—
His raiment decent, his complexion fair,
And soft in graceful ringlets waved his hair.
Then, near approaching, "Father, hail!" he cried;
"And hail, my son!" the rev'rend sire replied.
Words followed words, from question answer flowed,
And talk of various kind deceived the road;
Till, each with other pleased, and loth to part,
While in their age they differ, join in heart:

Thus stands an aged elm, in ivy bound;
Thus youthful ivy clasps an elm around.
Now sunk the sun; the closing hour of day
Came onward, mantled o'er with sober gray;
Nature in silence bid the world repose;
When near the road a stately palace rose:
There by the moon through ranks of trees they pass,
Whose verdure crowned their sloping sides of grass.
It chanced the noble master of the dome
Still made his house the wand'ring stranger's home;
Yet still the kindness, from a thirst of praise,
Proved the vain flourish of expensive ease.
The pair arrive: the liv'ried servants wait;
Their lord receives them at the pompous gate;
The table groans with costly piles of food,
And all is more than hospitably good;
Then, led to rest, the day's long toil they drown,
Deep sunk in sleep and silk and heaps of down.
At length 't is morn, and at the dawn of day
Along the wide canals the zephyrs play;
Fresh o'er the gay parterres the breezes creep,
And shake the neighb'ring wood to banish sleep.
Up rise the guests, obedient to the call:
An early banquet decked the splendid hall;
Rich luscious wine a golden goblet graced,
Which the kind master forced the guests to taste;
Then, pleased and thankful, from the porch they go,
And but the landlord none had cause of woe—
His cup was vanished, for in secret guise
The younger guest purloined the glittering prize.
As one who spies a serpent in his way,
Glist'ning and basking in the summer ray,
Disordered stops to shun the danger near,
Then walks with faintness on and looks with fear;
So seemed the sire, when, far upon the road,
The shining spoil his wily partner showed:
He stopped with silence, walked with trembling heart,
And much he wished, but durst not ask, to part;
Murm'ring he lifts his eyes, and thinks it hard
That generous actions meet a base reward.
While thus they pass, the sun his glory shrouds;

The changing skies hang out their sable clouds;
A sound in air presaged approaching rain,
And beasts to covert scud across the plain.
Warned by the signs, the wand'ring pair retreat,
To seek for shelter at a neighb'ring seat.
'T was built with turrets, on a rising ground,
And strong, and large, and unimproved around;
Its owner's temper, tim'rous and severe,
Unkind and griping, caused a desert there.

As near the miser's heavy doors they drew,
Fierce rising gusts with sudden fury blew;
The nimble lightning, mixed with show'rs, began,
And o'er their heads loud-rolling thunders ran.
Here long they knock, but knock or call in vain,
Driv'n by the wind and battered by the rain.
At length some pity warmed the master's breast
('T was then his threshold first received a guest):
Slow creaking, turns the door with jealous care,
And half he welcomes in the shivering pair;
One frugal faggot lights the naked walls,
And nature's fervour through their limbs recalls;
Bread of the coarsest sort, with eager wine,
Each hardly granted, served them both to dine;
And when the tempest first appeared to cease,
A ready warning bid them part in peace.
With still remark the pond'ring hermit viewed
In one so rich a life so poor and rude;
"And why should such," within himself he cried,
"Lock the lost wealth a thousand want beside?"
But what new marks of wonder soon took place
In ev'ry settling feature of his face,
When from his vest the young companion bore
That cup the gen'rous landlord owned before,
And paid profusely, with the precious bowl,
The stinted kindness of this churlish soul!

But now the clouds in airy tumult fly;
The sun, emerging, opes an azure sky;
A fresher green the smelling leaves display,
And, glitt'ring as they tremble, cheer the day:
The weather courts them from the poor retreat,
And the glad master bolts the wary gate.

While hence they walk, the pilgrim's bosom wrought
With all the travail of uncertain thought:
His partner's acts without their cause appear;
'T was there a vice, and seemed a madness here;
Detesting that, and pitying this, he goes,
Lost and confounded with the various shows.
Now night's dim shades again involve the sky;
Again the wand'rers want a place to lie;
Again they search, and find a lodging nigh:
The soil improved around, the mansion neat,
And neither poorly low nor idly great;
It seemed to speak its master's turn of mind—
Content, and not for praise, but virtue, kind.
Hither the walkers turn with weary feet,
Then bless the mansion and the master greet.
Their greeting, fair bestowed, with modest guise
The courteous master hears, and thus replies:
"Without a vain, without a grudging heart,
To Him Who gives us all I yield a part;
From Him you come, for Him accept it here,
A frank and sober more than costly cheer."
He spoke, and bid the welcome table spread,
Then talked of virtue till the time of bed,
When the grave household round his hall repair,
Warned by a bell, and close the hours with pray'r.
At length the world, renewed by calm repose,
Was strong for toil; the dappled morn arose.
Before the pilgrims part, the younger crept
Near the closed cradle where an infant slept,
And writhed his neck: the landlord's little pride
(O strange return!) grew black and gasped and died!
Horror of horrors! what! his only son!
How looked our hermit when the fact was done?
Not hell, though hell's black jaws in sunder part
And breathe blue fire, could more assault his heart.
Confused, and struck with silence at the deed,
He flies, but, trembling, fails to fly with speed;
His steps the youth pursues. The country lay
Perplexed with roads; a servant showed the way.
A river crossed the path; the passage o'er
Was nice to find; the servant trod before;

Long arms of oaks an open bridge supplied,
And deep the waves beneath the bending glide:
The youth, who seemed to watch a time to sin,
Approached the careless guide, and thrust him in;
Plunging he falls, and, rising, lifts his head,
Then flashing turns and sinks among the dead.
Wild, sparkling rage inflames the father's eyes;
He bursts the bands of fear, and madly cries,
"Detested wretch!"—but scarce his speech began,
When the strange partner seemed no longer man:
His youthful face grew more serenely sweet;
His robe turned white, and flowed upon his feet;
Fair rounds of radiant points invest his hair;
Celestial odours breathe through purpled air;
And wings, whose colours glittered on the day,
Wide at his back their gradual plumes display.
The form ethereal bursts upon his sight,
And moves in all the majesty of light.
Though loud at first the pilgrim's passion grew,
Sudden he gazed, and wist not what to do;
Surprise in secret chains his words suspends,
And in a calm his settling temper ends.
But silence here the beauteous angel broke;
The voice of music ravished as he spoke:
"Thy pray'r, thy praise, thy life to vice unknown,
In sweet memorial rise before the throne:
These charms success in our bright region find,
And force an angel down to calm thy mind;
For this commissioned, I forsook the sky—
Nay, cease to kneel! thy fellow-servant I.
"Then know the truth of government divine,
And let these scruples be no longer thine.
The Maker justly claims that world He made;
In this the right of Providence is laid;
Its sacred majesty through all depends
On using second means to work His ends:
'T is thus, withdrawn in state from human eye,
The Pow'r exerts His attributes on high,
Your actions uses, not controls your will,
And bids the doubting sons of men be still.
What strange events can strike with more surprise

Than those which lately strook thy wond'ring eyes?
Yet, taught by these, confess th' Almighty just,
And where you can't unriddle, learn to trust!
"The great vain man, who fared on costly food,
Whose life was too luxurious to be good,
Who made his iv'ry stands with goblets shine,
And forced his guests to morning draughts of wine,
Has, with the cup, the graceless custom lost,
And still he welcomes but with less of cost.
The mean, suspicious wretch, whose bolted door
Ne'er moved in duty to the wand'ring poor,
With him I left the cup, to teach his mind
That Heav'n can bless if mortals will be kind.
Conscious of wanting worth, he views the bowl,
And feels compassion touch his grateful soul.
Thus artists melt the sullen ore of lead
With heaping coals of fire upon its head;
In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,
And, loose from dross, the silver runs below.
Long had our pious friend in virtue trod,
But now the child half weaned his heart from God;
Child of his age, for him he lived in pain,
And measured back his steps to earth again.
To what excesses had his dotage run!
But God, to save the father, took the son.
To all but thee in fits he seemed to go,
And 't was my ministry to deal the blow.
The poor fond parent, humbled in the dust,
Now owns in tears the punishment was just.
But how had all his fortune felt a wrack
Had that false servant sped in safety back!
This night his treasured heaps he meant to steal,
And what a fund of charity would fail!
"Thus Heav'n instructs thy mind: this trial o'er,
Depart in peace, resign, and sin no more!"
On sounding pinions here the youth withdrew;
The sage stood wond'ring as the seraph flew:
Thus looked Elisha, when, to mount on high,
His master took the chariot of the sky;
The fiery pomp, ascending, left the view;
The prophet gazed, and wished to follow too.

The bending hermit here a pray'r begun:
"Lord, as in heaven, on earth Thy will be done!"
Then, gladly turning, sought his ancient place,
And passed a life of piety and peace.

1721.

JOHN GAY

FROM

THE SHEPHERD'S WEEK

THURSDAY, OR THE SPELL

Hobnelia, seated in a dreary vale,
In pensive mood rehearsed her piteous tale.
Her piteous tale the winds in sighs bemoan,
And pining Echo answers groan for groan.

I rue the day, a rueful day I trow,
The woeful day, a day indeed of woe!
When Lubberkin to town his cattle drove:
A maiden fine bedight he hapt to love;
The maiden fine bedight his love retains,
And for the village he forsakes the plains.
Return, my Lubberkin! these ditties hear!
Spells will I try, and spells shall ease my care.
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.
When first the year I heard the cuckoo sing
And call with welcome note the budding spring,
I straightway set a-running with such haste,
Deb'rah that won the smock scarce ran so fast;
Till, spent for lack of breath, quite weary grown,
Upon a rising bank I sat adown,
Then doffed my shoe, and by my troth, I swear,
Therein I spied this yellow frizzled hair,
As like to Lubberkin's in curl and hue
As if upon his comely pate it grew.
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.

At eve last Midsummer no sleep I sought,
But to the field a bag of hempseed brought.
I scattered round the seed on ev'ry side,
And three times in a trembling accent cried,
"This hempseed with my virgin hand I sow;
Who shall my true-love be the crop shall mow."
I straight looked back, and, if my eyes speak truth,
With his keen scythe behind me came the youth.
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.
Last Valentine, the day when birds of kind
Their paramours with mutual chirpings find,
I rearly rose, just at the break of day,
Before the sun had chased the stars away;
A-field I went, amid the morning dew,
To milk my kine (for so should huswives do):
Thee first I spied; and the first swain we see,
In spite of fortune shall our true-love be.
See, Lubberkin, each bird his partner take;
And canst thou then thy sweetheart dear forsake?
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.
Last May Day fair I searched to find a snail
That might my secret lover's name reveal.
Upon a gooseberry-bush a snail I found,
For always snails near sweetest fruit abound.
I seized the vermin, home I quickly sped,
And on the hearth the milk-white embers spread:
Slow crawled the snail, and, if I right can spell,
In the soft ashes marked a curious L.
Oh, may this wondrous omen lucky prove!
For L is found in "Lubberkin" and "Love."
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.
Two hazel-nuts I threw into the flame,
And to each nut I gave a sweetheart's name.
This with the loudest bounce me sore amazed,
That in a flame of brightest colour blazed.
As blazed the nut so may thy passion grow,
For 't was thy nut that did so brightly glow.

With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.
As peascods once I plucked, I chanced to see
One that was closely filled with three times three;
Which when I cropped I safely home conveyed,
And o'er my door the spell in secret laid.
My wheel I turned, and sung a ballad new,
While from the spindle I the fleeces drew.
The latch moved up, when who should first come in
But in his proper person—Lubberkin!
I broke my yarn, surprised the sight to see,—
Sure sign that he would break his word with me.
Eftsoons I joined it with my wonted slight:
So may again his love with mine unite!
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.
This lady-fly I take from off the grass,
Whose spotted back might scarlet red surpass:
"Fly, lady-bird, north, south, or east, or west!
Fly where the man is found that I love best!"
He leaves my hand: see, to the west he 's flown,
To call my true-love from the faithless town.
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.
This mellow pippin, which I pare around,
My shepherd's name shall flourish on the ground:
I fling th' unbroken paring o'er my head—
Upon the grass a perfect L is read.
Yet on my heart a fairer L is seen
Than what the paring marks upon the green.
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.
This pippin shall another trial make.
See, from the core two kernels brown I take:
This on my cheek for Lubberkin is worn,
And Boobyclod on t' other side is borne;
But Boobyclod soon drops upon the ground
(A certain token that his love 's unsound),
While Lubberkin sticks firmly to the last—
Oh, were his lips to mine but joined so fast!

With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.
As Lubberkin once slept beneath a tree,
I twitched his dangling garter from his knee;
He wist not when the hempen string I drew.
Now mine I quickly doff of inkle blue;
Together fast I tie the garters twain,
And while I knit the knot repeat this strain:
"Three times a true-love's knot I tie secure;
Firm be the knot, firm may his love endure!"
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.
As I was wont, I trudged last market-day
To town, with new-laid eggs preserved in hay.
I made my market long before 't was night;
My purse grew heavy and my basket light:
Straight to the pothecary's shop I went,
And in love-powder all my money spent.
Behap what will, next Sunday after prayers,
When to the alehouse Lubberkin repairs,
These golden flies into his mug I'll throw,
And soon the swain with fervent love shall glow.
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.
But hold! our Lightfoot barks, and cocks his ears:
O'er yonder stile, see, Lubberkin appears!
He comes, he comes! Hobnelia's not bewrayed,
Nor shall she, crowned with willow, die a maid.
He vows, he swears, he 'll give me a green gown:
Oh dear! I fall adown, adown, adown!

1714.

A BALLAD

'T was when the seas were roaring
With hollow blasts of wind,
A damsel lay deploring,
All on a rock reclined.
Wide o'er the rolling billows
She cast a wistful look;
Her head was crowned with willows
That tremble o'er the brook.

"Twelve months are gone and over,
And nine long tedious days:
Why didst thou, vent'rous lover,
Why didst thou trust the seas?
Cease, cease, thou cruel ocean,
And let my lover rest!
Ah, what's thy troubled motion
To that within my breast?

"The merchant, robbed of pleasure,
Sees tempests in despair;
But what's the loss of treasure
To losing of my dear?
Should you some coast be laid on
Where gold and di'monds grow,
You'd find a richer maiden,
But none that loves you so.

"How can they say that Nature
Has nothing made in vain?
Why, then, beneath the water
Should hideous rocks remain?
No eyes the rocks discover,
That lurk beneath the deep
To wreck the wand'ring lover
And leave the maid to weep."

All melancholy lying,
Thus wailed she for her dear;
Repaid each blast with sighing,
Each billow with a tear:
When, o'er the white wave stooping,
His floating corpse she spied;
Then, like a lily drooping,
She bowed her head and died.

1715.

FROM

TRIVIA

Through winter streets to steer your course aright,
How to walk clean by day and safe by night,
How jostling crowds with prudence to decline,

When to assert the wall and when resign,
I sing. Thou, Trivia, goddess, aid my song;
Through spacious streets conduct thy bard along.
. . . . . .
For ease and for dispatch, the morning's best;
No tides of passengers the street molest.
You 'll see a draggled damsel, here and there,
From Billingsgate her fishy traffic bear;
On doors the sallow milk-maid chalks her gains—
Ah, how unlike the milk-maid of the plains!
Before proud gates attending asses bray,
Or arrogate with solemn pace the way;
These grave physicians with their milky cheer
The lovesick maid and dwindling beau repair.
Here rows of drummers stand in martial file,
And with their vellum thunder shake the pile,
To greet the new-made bride: are sounds like these
The proper prelude to a state of peace?
Now Industry awakes her busy sons:
Full charged with news, the breathless hawker runs;
Shops open, coaches roll, carts shake the ground,
And all the streets with passing cries resound.
If clothed in black you tread the busy town,
Or if distinguished by the rev'rend gown,
Three trades avoid: oft in the mingling press
The barber's apron soils the sable dress;
Shun the perfumer's touch with cautious eye,
Nor let the baker's step advance too nigh.
Ye walkers too that youthful colours wear,
Three sullying trades avoid with equal care:
The little chimney-sweeper skulks along,
And marks with sooty stains the heedless throng;
When "Small-coal!" murmurs in the hoarser throat,
From smutty dangers guard thy threatened coat;
The dust-man's cart offends thy clothes and eyes,
When through the street a cloud of ashes flies.
But whether black or lighter dyes are worn,
The chandler's basket, on his shoulder borne,
With tallow spots thy coat; resign the way
To shun the surly butcher's greasy tray—
Butchers whose hands are dyed with blood's foul stain,

And always foremost in the hangman's train.
Let due civilities be strictly paid:
The wall surrender to the hooded maid,
Nor let thy sturdy elbow's hasty rage
Jostle the feeble steps of trembling age;
And when the porter bends beneath his load,
And pants for breath, clear thou the crowded road;
But, above all, the groping blind direct,
And from the pressing throng the lame protect.
You 'll sometimes meet a fop, of nicest tread,
Whose mantling peruke veils his empty head;
At ev'ry step he dreads the wall to lose
And risks, to save a coach, his red-heeled shoes:
Him, like the miller, pass with caution by,
Lest from his shoulder clouds of powder fly.
But when the bully, with assuming pace,
Cocks his broad hat, edged round with tarnished lace,
Yield not the way; defy his strutting pride,
And thrust him to the muddy kennel's side;
He never turns again nor dares oppose,
But mutters coward curses as he goes.

. . . . . .

But hark! Distress with screaming voice draws nigh'r,
And wakes the slumb'ring street with cries of fire.
At first a glowing red enwraps the skies,
And, borne by winds, the scatt'ring sparks arise;
From beam to beam the fierce contagion spreads;
The spiry flames now lift aloft their heads;
Through the burst sash a blazing deluge pours,
And splitting tiles descend in rattling show'rs.
Now with thick crowds th' enlightened pavement swarms;
The fireman sweats beneath his crooked arms;
A leathern casque his vent'rous head defends;
Boldly he climbs where thickest smoke ascends;
Moved by the mother's streaming eyes and pray'rs,
The helpless infant through the flame he bears,
With no less virtue than through hostile fire
The Dardan hero bore his aged sire.
See forceful engines spout their levelled streams,
To quench the blaze that runs along the beams;
The grappling-hook plucks rafters from the walls,

And heaps on heaps the smoky ruin falls;
Blown by strong winds, the fiery tempest roars,
Bears down new walls, and pours along the floors.
The heav'ns are all ablaze; the face of night
Is covered with a sanguine, dreadful light:
'T was such a light involved thy tow'rs, O Rome,
The dire presage of mighty Caesar's doom,
When the sun veiled in rust his mourning head,
And frightful prodigies the skies o'erspread.
Hark! the drum thunders! far, ye crowds, retire:
Behold, the ready match is tipt with fire,
The nitrous store is laid, the smutty train
With running blaze awakes the barrelled grain;
Flames sudden wrap the walls; with sullen sound
The shattered pile sinks on the smoky ground.
So when the years shall have revolved the date,
Th' inevitable hour of Naples' fate,
Her sapped foundations shall with thunders shake,
And heave and toss upon the sulph'rous lake;
Earth's womb at once the fiery flood shall rend,
And in th' abyss her plunging tow'rs descend.

. . . . . .

And now complete my gen'rous labours lie,
Finished, and ripe for immortality:
Death shall entomb in dust this mould'ring frame,
But never reach th' eternal part, my fame.
When W * and G * *, mighty names, are dead,
Or but at Chelsea under custards read;
When critics crazy bandboxes repair,
And tragedies, turned rockets, bounce in air;
High-raised on Fleet Street posts, consigned to fame,
This work shall shine, and walkers bless my name.

1716.

MY OWN EPITAPH

Life is a jest, and all things show it.
I thought so once, but now I know it.

1720.

SWEET WILLIAM'S FAREWELL TO BLACK-EYED SUSAN

All in the Downs the fleet was moored,
The streamers waving in the wind,
When black-eyed Susan came aboard:
"Oh, where shall I my true love find?
Tell me, ye jovial sailors, tell me true
If my sweet William sails among the crew?"

William, who high upon the yard
Rocked with the billow to and fro,
Soon as her well-known voice he heard,
He sighed and cast his eyes below:
The cord slides swiftly through his glowing hands,
And, quick as lightning, on the deck he stands.

So the sweet lark, high poised in air,
Shuts close his pinions to his breast,
If chance his mate's shrill call he hear,
And drops at once into her nest.
The noblest captain in the British fleet
Mighty envy William's lip those kisses sweet.

"O Susan, Susan, lovely dear,
My vows shall ever true remain!
Let me kiss off that falling tear:
We only part to meet again.
Change as ye list, ye winds! my heart shall be
The faithful compass that still points to thee.

"Believe not what the landmen say,
Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind:
They 'll tell thee sailors, when away,
In ev'ry port a mistress find—
Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,
For thou art present wheresoe'er I go.

"If to far India's coast we sail,
Thy eyes are seen in di'monds bright;
Thy breath is Afric's spicy gale,
Thy skin is ivory so white.
Thus ev'ry beauteous object that I view
Wakes in my soul some charm of lovely Sue.

"Though battle call me from thy arms,
Let not my pretty Susan mourn;
Though cannons roar, yet, safe from harms,
William shall to his dear return.
Love turns aside the balls that round me fly,
Lest precious tears should drop from Susan's eye."

The boatswain gave the dreadful word;
The sails their swelling bosom spread;
No longer must she stay aboard:
They kissed—she sighed—he hung his head.
Her less'ning boat unwilling rows to land;
"Adieu!" she cries, and waved her lily hand.

1720.

THE FOX AT THE POINT OF DEATH

A fox, in life's extreme decay,
Weak, sick, and faint, expiring lay;
All appetite had left his maw,
And age disarmed his mumbling jaw.
His num'rous race around him stand,
To learn their dying sire's command;
He raised his head with whining moan,
And thus was heard the feeble tone:
"Ah, sons, from evil ways depart!
My crimes lie heavy on my heart.
See, see, the murdered geese appear!
Why are those bleeding turkeys there?
Why all around this cackling train,
Who haunt my ears for chickens slain?"
The hungry foxes round them stared,
And for the promised feast prepared.
"Where, sir, is all this dainty cheer?
Nor turkey, goose, nor hen is here.
These are the phantoms of your brain,
And your sons lick their lips in vain."
"O gluttons!" says the drooping sire,
"Restrain inordinate desire!
Your liqu'rish taste you shall deplore
When peace of conscience is no more.
Does not the hound betray our pace,

And gins and guns destroy our race?
Thieves dread the searching eye of pow'r,
And never feel the quiet hour.
Old age, which few of us shall know,
Now puts a period to my woe.
Would you true happiness attain,
Let honesty your passions reign;
So live in credit and esteem,
And the good name you lost redeem."
"The counsel's good," a fox replies,
"Could we perform what you advise.
Think what our ancestors have done—
A line of thieves from son to son!
To us descends the long disgrace,
And infamy hath marked our race.
Though we like harmless sheep should feed,
Honest in thought, in word, and deed,
Whatever hen-roost is decreased,
We shall be thought to share the feast.
The change shall never be believed;
A lost good name is ne'er retrieved."
"Nay, then," replies the feeble fox
"(But hark! I hear a hen that clocks)—
Go, but be mod'rate in your food:
A chicken, too, might do me good."

1725–26. 1727.

ALLAN RAMSAY

AN THOU WERE MY AIN THING

CHORUS.—An thou were my ain thing,
I would love thee, I would love thee!
An thou were my ain thing,
How dearly would I love thee!

Like bees that suck the morning dew
Frae flowers of sweetest scent and hue,
Sae wad I dwell upo' thy mou,
And gar the gods envy me.

Sae lang 's I had the use of light,
I 'd on thy beauties feast my sight;
Syne in saft whispers through the night
I 'd tell how much I loo'd thee.

How fair and ruddy is my Jean!
She moves a goddess o'er the green:
Were I a king, thou shou'd be queen,
Nane but mysell aboon thee.

I 'd grasp thee to this breast of mine,
Whilst thou, like ivy or the vine,
Around my stronger limbs shou'd twine,
Formed hardy to defend thee.

Time 's on the wing, and will not stay:
In shining youth let 's make our hay;
Since love admits of no delay,
O let na scorn undo thee!

While Love does at his altar stand,
Hae there 's my heart, gi'e me thy hand,
And with ilk smile thou shalt command
The will of him wha loves thee.

1721.

THE HIGHLAND LADDIE

The Lawland lads think they are fine,
But O they 're vain and idly gaudy;
How much unlike that gracefu' mien
And manly looks of my Highland laddie!

CHORUS.—O my bonny, bonny Highland laddie!
My handsome, charming Highland laddie!
May Heaven still guard and love reward
Our Lawland lass and her Highland laddie!

If I were free at will to chuse
To be the wealthiest Lawland lady,
I 'd take young Donald without trews,
With bonnet blew and belted plaidy.

The brawest beau in borrows town,
In a' his airs, with art made ready,
Compared to him, he 's but a clown;
He 's finer far in 's tartan plaidy.

O'er benty hill with him I 'll run,
And leave my Lawland kin and dady;
Frae winter's cauld and summer's sun
He 'll screen me with his Highland plaidy.

A painted room and silken bed
May please a Lawland laird and lady,
But I can kiss and be as glad
Behind a bush in 's Highland plaidy.

Few compliments between us pass:
I ca' him my dear Highland laddie;
And he ca's me his Lawland lass,
Syne rows me in his Highland plaidy.

Nae greater joy I 'll e'er pretend
Than that his love prove true and steady,
Like mine to him, which ne'er shall end
While Heaven preserve my Highland laddie.

1721.

FROM

THE GENTLE SHEPHERD

Beneath the south side of a craigy bield,
Where crystal springs the halesome waters yield,
Twa youthfu' shepherds on the gowans lay,
Tenting their flocks ae bonny morn of May.
Poor Roger granes, till hollow echoes ring;
But blither Patie likes to laugh and sing.

Patie. My Peggy is a young thing,
Just entered in her teens,
Fair as the day, and sweet as May,
Fair as the day, and always gay;
My Peggy is a young thing,
And I 'm not very auld,
Yet well I like to meet her at
The wauking of the fauld.

My Peggy speaks sae sweetly
Whene'er we meet alane,
I wish nae mair to lay my care,
I wish nae mair of a' that's rare;
My Peggy speaks sae sweetly,
To a' the lave I'm cauld,
But she gars a' my spirits glow
At wauking of the fauld.

My Peggy smiles sae kindly
Whene'er I whisper love,
That I look down on a' the town,
That I look down upon a crown;
My Peggy smiles sae kindly,
It makes me blythe and bauld,
And naething gi'es me sic delight
At wauking of the fauld.

My Peggy sings sae saftly
When on my pipe I play,
By a' the rest it is confest,
By a' the rest, that she sings best;
My Peggy sings sae saftly,
And in her sangs are tauld
With innocence the wale of sense,
At wauking of the fauld.

This sunny morning, Roger, chears my blood,
And puts all Nature in a jovial mood.
How hartsom is't to see the rising plants,
To hear the birds chirm o'er their pleasing rants!
How halesom 't is to snuff the cauler air,
And all the sweets it bears, when void of care!
What ails thee, Roger, then? what gars thee grane?
Tell me the cause of thy ill-seasoned pain.

Roger. I'm born, O Patie, to a thrawart fate;
I'm born to strive with hardships sad and great!
Tempests may cease to jaw the rowan flood,
Corbies and tods to grein for lambkins' blood;
But I, oppressed with never-ending grief,
Maun ay despair of lighting on relief.

Patie. The bees shall loathe the flow'r and quit the hive,

The saughs on boggie ground shall cease to thrive,
Ere scornful queans or loss of warldly gear
Shall spill my rest or ever force a tear.
Roger. Sae might I say; but it's no easy done
By ane whase saul's sae sadly out of tune.
You have sae saft a voice and slid a tongue,
You are the darling of baith auld and young:
If I but ettle at a sang or speak,
They dit their lugs, syne up their leglens cleek,
And jeer me hameward frae the loan or bught,
While I'm confused with mony a vexing thought;
Yet I am tall, and as well built as thee,
Nor mair unlikely to a lass's eye;
For ilka sheep ye have I'll number ten,
And should, as ane may think, come farer ben.
Patie. But, ablins, nibour, ye have not a heart,
And downa eithly wi' your cunzie part;
If that be true, what signifies your gear?
A mind that's scrimpit never wants some care.
Roger. My byar tumbled, nine braw nowt were smoored,
Three elf-shot were; yet I these ills endured.
In winter last my cares were very sma',
Tho' scores of wethers perished in the snaw.
Patie. Were your bien rooms as thinly stocked as mine,
Less ye wad loss and less ye wad repine:
He that has just enough can soundly sleep;
The o'ercome only fashes fouk to keep.
Roger. May plenty flow upon thee for a cross,
That thou may'st thole the pangs of mony a loss!
O may'st thou doat on some fair paughty wench,
That ne'er will lout thy lowan drouth to quench!
Till, brised beneath the burden, thou cry dool,
And awn that ane may fret that is nae fool.
Patie. Sax good fat lambs, I sauld them ilka clute
At the West Port, and bought a winsome flute,
Of plum-tree made, with iv'ry virles round—
A dainty whistle, with a pleasant sound:
I'll be mair canty wi't, and ne'er cry dool,
Than you with all your cash, ye dowie fool!
Roger. Na, Patie, na! I'm nae sic churlish beast;
Some other thing lies heavier at my breast:

I dreamed a dreary dream this hinder night,
That gars my flesh a' creep yet with the fright.
Patie. Now, to a friend, how silly 's this pretence,
To ane wha you and a' your secrets kens:
Daft are your dreams; as daftly wad ye hide
Your well-seen love and dorty Jenny's pride.
Take courage, Roger! me your sorrows tell,
And safely think nane kens them but yoursell.
Roger. Indeed now, Patie, ye have guessed o'er true,
And there is naething I 'll keep up frae you.
Me dorty Jenny looks upon asquint;
To speak but till her I dare hardly mint.
In ilka place she jeers me air and late,
And gars me look bombazed and unco blate.
But yesterday I met her yont a knowe;
She fled as frae a shelly-coated cow.
She Bauldy loo'es, Bauldy that drives the car,
But gecks at me and says I smell of tar.
Patie. But Bauldy loo'es not her, right well I wat;
He sighs for Neps: sae that may stand for that.
Roger. I wish I cou'dna loo'e her—but in vain!
I still maun doat, and thole her proud disdain.
My Bawty is a cur I dearly like:
Till he yowled fair she strak the poor dumb tyke;
If I had filled a nook within her breast,
She wad have shawn mair kindness to my beast.
When I begin to tune my stock and horn,
With a' her face she shaws a caulrife scorn:
Last night I played ye never heard sic spite;
"O'er Bogie" was the spring, and her delyte;
Yet tauntingly she at her cousin speered
Gif she could tell what tune I played, and sneered.
Flocks, wander where ye like; I dinna care!
I 'll break my reed, and never whistle mair.
Patie. E'en do sae, Roger; wha can help misluck,
Saebeins she be sic a thrawn-gabbit chuck?
Yonder 's a craig; since ye have tint all houp,
Gae till 't your ways and tak the lover's loup.
Roger. I needna mak sic speed my blood to spill;
I 'll warrant death come soon eneugh a-will.

Patie. Daft gowk! leave aff that silly whinging way!
Seem careless: there's my hand ye'll win the day.
Hear how I served my lass I love as weel
As ye do Jenny and with heart as leel.
Last morning I was gay and early out;
Upon a dyke I leaned, glowring about.
I saw my Meg come linkan o'er the lea;
I saw my Meg, but Peggy saw na me,
For yet the sun was wading thro' the mist,
And she was close upon me e'er she wist:
Her coats were kiltit, and did sweetly shaw
Her straight bare legs, that whiter were than snaw.
Her cockernony snooded up fou sleek,
Her haffet-locks hang waving on her cheek;
Her cheeks sae ruddy, and her een sae clear;
And, oh, her mouth's like ony hinny pear;
Neat, neat she was in bustine waistcoat clean,
As she came skiffing o'er the dewy green.
Blythsome I cried, "My bonnie Meg, come here!
I ferly wherefore ye're sae soon asteer,
But I can guess ye're gawn to gather dew."
She scoured awa, and said, "What's that to you?"
"Then fare ye weel, Meg Dorts, and e'en's ye like,"
I careless cried, and lap in o'er the dyke.
I trow when that she saw, within a crack
She came with a right thieveless errand back:
Misca'd me first; then bade me hound my dog,
To wear up three waff ewes strayed on the bog.
I leugh, an sae did she: then with great haste
I clasped my arms about her neck and waist,
About her yielding waist, and took a fouth
Of sweetest kisses frae her glowing mouth;
While hard and fast I held her in my grips,
My very saul came louping to my lips;
Sair, sair she flet wi' me 'tween ilka smack,
But weel I kenned she meant nae as she spak.
Dear Roger, when your jo puts on her gloom,
Do ye sae too and never fash your thumb:
Seem to forsake her, soon she'll change her mood;
Gae woo anither, and she'll gang clean wood.

Dear Roger, if your Jenny geck,
And answer kindness with a slight,
Seem unconcerned at her neglect;
For women in a man delight,
But them despise who 're soon defeat
And with a simple face give way
To a repulse: then be not blate;
Push bauldly on, and win the day.

When maidens, innocently young,
Say aften what they never mean,
Ne'er mind their pretty lying tongue,
But tent the language of their een:
If these agree, and she persist
To answer all your love with hate,
Seek elsewhere to be better blest,
And let her sigh when 't is too late.

Roger. Kind Patie, now fair fa' your honest heart!
Ye 're ay sae cadgy, and have sic an art
To hearten ane; for now, as clean 's a leek,
Ye 've cherished me since ye began to speak.
Sae, for your pains, I 'll mak ye a propine
(My mother, rest her saul! she made it fine)—
A tartan plaid, spun of good hawslock woo,
Scarlet and green the sets, the borders blue,
With spraings like gowd and siller crossed with black;
I never had it yet upon my back:
Weel are ye wordy o 't, wha have sae kind
Red up my reveled doubts and cleared my mind.
Patie. Weel, ha'd ye there. And since ye 've frankly made
To me a present of your braw new plaid,
My flute 's be yours; and she too that 's sae nice
Shall come a-will, gif ye 'll tak my advice.
Roger. As ye advise, I 'll promise to observe 't.
But ye maun keep the flute; ye best deserve 't:
Now tak it out and gie 's a bonny spring,
For I 'm in tift to hear you play and sing.
Patie. But first we 'll take a turn up to the height,
And see gif all our flocks be feeding right.

Be that time bannocks and a shave of cheese
Will make a breakfast that a laird might please;
Might please the daintiest gabs, were they sae wise
To season meat with health instead of spice.
When we have tane the grace-drink at this well,
I 'll whistle syne, and sing t' ye like mysell.

1721.

MATTHEW GREEN

FROM

THE SPLEEN

Forced by soft violence of pray'r,
The blithesome goddess soothes my care;
I feel the deity inspire,
And thus she models my desire.
Two hundred pounds half-yearly paid,
Annuity securely made;
A farm some twenty miles from town,
Small, tight, salubrious, and my own;
Two maids, that never saw the town;
A serving-man not quite a clown;
A boy to help to tread the mow,
And drive while t' other holds the plough;
A chief, of temper formed to please,
Fit to converse and keep the keys,
And, better to preserve the peace,
Commissioned by the name of niece;
With understandings of a size
To think their master very wise.
May Heav'n (it 's all I wish for) send
One genial room to treat a friend,
Where decent cupboard, little plate,
Display benevolence, not state.
And may my humble dwelling stand
Upon some chosen spot of land.
A pond before, full to the brim,
Where cows may cool and geese may swim;
Behind, a green like velvet neat,

Soft to the eye and to the feet,
Where od'rous plants in evening fair
Breathe all around ambrosial air;
From Eurus, foe to kitchen ground,
Fenced by a slope with bushes crowned,
Fit dwelling for the feathered throng,
Who pay their quit-rents with a song;
With op'ning views of hill and dale,
Which sense and fancy too regale,
Where the half-cirque, which vision bounds,
Like amphitheatre surrounds,
And woods impervious to the breeze—
Thick phalanx of embodied trees,
From hills through plains in dusk array
Extended far—repel the day.
Here stillness, height, and solemn shade
Invite, and contemplation aid;
Here nymphs from hollow oaks relate
The dark decrees and will of Fate,
And dreams beneath the spreading beech
Inspire, and docile Fancy teach,
While, soft as breezy breath of wind,
Impulses rustle through the mind;
Here dryads, scorning Phoebus' ray,
While Pan melodious pipes away,
In measured motions frisk about,
Till old Silenus puts them out.
There see the clover, pea, and bean
Vie in variety of green;
Fresh pastures speckled o'er with sheep;
Brown fields their fallow Sabbaths keep;
Plump Ceres golden tresses wear,
And poppy top-knots deck her hair;
And silver streams through meadows stray,
And naiads on the margin play;
And lesser nymphs on side of hills
From plaything urns pour down the rills.
Thus sheltered, free from care and strife,
May I enjoy a calm through life;
See faction, safe in low degree,
As men at land see storms at sea;

And laugh at miserable elves,
Not kind so much as to themselves,
Cursed with such souls of base alloy
As can possess but not enjoy,
Debarred the pleasure to impart
By av'rice, sphincter of the heart,
Who wealth, hard earned by guilty cares,
Bequeath untouched to thankless heirs.
May I, with look ungloomed by guile,
And wearing Virtue's liv'ry-smile,
Prone the distressèd to relieve
And little trespasses forgive,
With income not in Fortune's pow'r,
And skill to make a busy hour,
With trips to town life to amuse,
To purchase books, and hear the news,
To see old friends, brush off the clown,
And quicken taste at coming down,
Unhurt by sickness' blasting rage,
And slowly mellowing in age,
When Fate extends its gathering gripe,
Fall off like fruit grown fully ripe,
Quit a worn being without pain,
Perhaps to blossom soon again.

1737.

JOHN DYER

GRONGAR HILL

Silent nymph with curious eye,
Who, the purple ev'ning, lie
On the mountain's lonely van
Beyond the noise of busy man,
Painting fair the form of things,
While the yellow linnet sings,
Or the tuneful nightingale
Charms the forest with her tale;
Come with all thy various hues,
Come, and aid thy sister Muse,

Now while Phœbus riding high
Gives lustre to the land and sky!
Grongar Hill invites my song,—
Draw the landskip bright and strong;
Grongar, in whose mossy cells
Sweetly musing Quiet dwells;
Grongar, in whose silent shade,
For the modest Muses made,
So oft I have, the evening still,
At the fountain of a rill,
Sate upon a flow'ry bed
With my hand beneath my head,
While strayed my eyes o'er Towy's flood,
Over mead and over wood,
From house to house, from hill to hill,
Till Contemplation had her fill.

Above his chequered sides I wind
And leave his brooks and meads behind,
And groves and grottoes where I lay,
And vistoes shooting beams of day.
Wide and wider spreads the vale,
As circles on a smooth canal;
The mountains round, unhappy fate,
Sooner or later, of all height,
Withdraw their summits from the skies
And lessen as the others rise:
Still the prospect wider spreads,
Adds a thousand woods and meads;
Still it widens, widens still,
And sinks the newly-risen hill.

Now I gain the mountain's brow—
What a landskip lies below!
No clouds, no vapours intervene,
But the gay, the open scene
Does the face of Nature show
In all the hues of heaven's bow,
And, swelling to embrace the light,
Spreads around beneath the sight.

Old castles on the cliffs arise,
Proudly tow'ring in the skies;
Rushing from the woods, the spires

Seem from hence ascending fires;
Half his beams Apollo sheds
On the yellow mountain-heads,
Gilds the fleeces of the flocks,
And glitters on the broken rocks.
Below me trees unnumbered rise,
Beautiful in various dyes:
The gloomy pine, the poplar blue,
The yellow beech, the sable yew,
The slender fir that taper grows,
The sturdy oak with broad-spread boughs.
And beyond the purple grove,
Haunt of Phyllis, queen of love,
Gaudy as the op'ning dawn
Lies a long and level lawn,
On which a dark hill, steep and high,
Holds and charms the wand'ring eye;
Deep are his feet in Towy's flood,
His sides are clothed with waving wood,
And ancient towers crown his brow
That cast an awful look below,
Whose ragged walls the ivy creeps
And with her arms from falling keeps—
So both a safety from the wind
On mutual dependence find.
'T is now the raven's bleak abode;
'T is now th' apartment of the toad;
And there the fox securely feeds;
And there the pois'nous adder breeds,
Concealed in ruins, moss, and weeds;
While, ever and anon, there falls
Huge heaps of hoary mouldered walls.
Yet Time has seen, that lifts the low
And level lays the lofty brow,
Has seen this broken pile complete,
Big with the vanity of state;
But transient is the smile of Fate:
A little rule, a little sway,
A sunbeam in a winter's day,
Is all the proud and mighty have
Between the cradle and the grave.

And see the rivers, how they run
Through woods and meads, in shade and sun;
Sometimes swift, sometimes slow,
Wave succeeding wave, they go
A various journey to the deep,
Like human life to endless sleep:
Thus is Nature's vesture wrought
To instruct our wand'ring thought;
Thus she dresses green and gay
To disperse our cares away.
Ever charming, ever new,
When will the landskip tire the view!
The fountain's fall, the river's flow,
The woody valleys, warm and low,
The windy summit, wild and high,
Roughly rushing on the sky,
The pleasant seat, the ruined tow'r,
The naked rock, the shady bow'r,
The town and village, dome and farm,
Each give each a double charm,
As pearls upon an Æthiop's arm.
See on the mountain's southern side,
Where the prospect opens wide,
Where the evening gilds the tide,
How close and small the hedges lie,
What streaks of meadows cross the eye!
A step methinks may pass the stream.
So little distant dangers seem;
So we mistake the Future's face,
Eyed through Hope's deluding glass,
As yon summits soft and fair,
Clad in colours of the air,
Which to those who journey near
Barren, brown, and rough appear:
Still we tread the same coarse way;
The present 's still a cloudy day.
O may I with myself agree,
And never covet what I see;
Content me with an humble shade,
My passions tamed, my wishes laid:
For while our wishes wildly roll,

We banish quiet from the soul;
'T is thus the busy beat the air,
And misers gather wealth and care.
Now, ev'n now, my joys run high,
As on the mountain-turf I lie;
While the wanton Zephyr sings,
And in the vale perfumes his wings;
While the waters murmur deep;
While the shepherd charms his sheep;
While the birds unbounded fly,
And with music fill the sky;
Now, ev'n now, my joys run high.
Be full, ye courts; be great who will;
Search for Peace with all your skill:
Open wide the lofty door,
Seek her on the marble floor;
In vain you search, she is not there;
In vain ye search the domes of care!
Grass and flowers Quiet treads,
On the meads and mountain-heads,
Along with Pleasure, close allied,
Ever by each other's side;
And often, by the murm'ring rill,
Hears the thrush, while all is still,
Within the groves of Grongar Hill.

1726.

JAMES THOMSON

THE SEASONS

FROM

WINTER

The keener tempests come; and, fuming dun
From all the livid east or piercing north,
Thick clouds ascend, in whose capacious womb
A vapoury deluge lies, to snow congealed.
Heavy they roll their fleecy world along,
And the sky saddens with the gathered storm.
Through the hushed air the whitening shower descends,

At first thin wavering, till at last the flakes
Fall broad and wide and fast, dimming the day
With a continual flow. The cherished fields
Put on their winter robe of purest white;
'T is brightness all, save where the new snow melts
Along the mazy current; low the woods
Bow their hoar head; and ere the languid sun
Faint from the west emits his evening ray,
Earth's universal face, deep-hid and chill,
Is one wild dazzling waste, that buries wide
The works of man. Drooping, the labourer-ox
Stands covered o'er with snow, and then demands
The fruit of all his toil. The fowls of heaven,
Tamed by the cruel season, crowd around
The winnowing store, and claim the little boon
Which Providence assigns them. One alone,
The redbreast, sacred to the household gods,
Wisely regardful of th' embroiling sky,
In joyless fields and thorny thickets leaves
His shivering mates, and pays to trusted man
His annual visit: Half-afraid, he first
Against the window beats; then brisk alights
On the warm hearth; then, hopping o'er the floor,
Eyes all the smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is,
Till, more familiar grown, the table-crumbs
Attract his slender feet. The foodless wilds
Pour forth their brown inhabitants. The hare,
Though timorous of heart and hard beset
By death in various forms—dark snares, and dogs,
And more unpitying men,—the garden seeks,
Urged on by fearless want. The bleating kind
Eye the black heaven, and next the glistening earth,
With looks of dumb despair; then, sad dispersed,
Dig for the withered herb through heaps of snow.
Now, shepherds, to your helpless charge be kind:
Baffle the raging year, and fill their pens
With food at will; lodge them below the storm,
And watch them strict, for from the bellowing east,
In this dire season, oft the whirlwind's wing
Sweeps up the burthen of whole wintry plains

At one wide waft, and o'er the hapless flocks,
Hid in the hollow of two neighbouring hills,
The billowy tempest whelms, till, upward urged,
The valley to a shining mountain swells,
Tipt with a wreath high-curling in the sky,
As thus the snows arise, and foul and fierce
All Winter drives along the darkened air,
In his own loose-revolving fields the swain
Disastered stands; sees other hills ascend,
Of unknown, joyless brow, and other scenes,
Of horrid prospect, shag the trackless plain;
Nor finds the river nor the forest, hid
Beneath the formless wild, but wanders on
From hill to dale, still more and more astray,
Impatient flouncing through the drifted heaps,
Stung with the thoughts of home. The thoughts of home
Rush on his nerves, and call their vigour forth
In many a vain attempt. How sinks his soul,
What black despair, what horror fills his heart,
When, for the dusky spot which fancy feigned
His tufted cottage rising through the snow,
He meets the roughness of the middle waste,
Far from the track and blest abode of man,
While round him night resistless closes fast,
And every tempest, howling o'er his head,
Renders the savage wilderness more wild!
Then throng the busy shapes into his mind
Of covered pits unfathomably deep
(A dire descent!), beyond the power of frost;
Of faithless bogs; of precipices huge,
Smoothed up with snow; and—what is land unknown,
What water—of the still unfrozen spring,
In the loose marsh or solitary lake,
Where the fresh fountain from the bottom boils.
These check his fearful steps; and down he sinks
Beneath the shelter of the shapeless drift,
Thinking o'er all the bitterness of death,
Mixed with the tender anguish nature shoots
Through the wrung bosom of the dying man—
His wife, his children, and his friends unseen.
In vain for him th' officious wife prepares

The fire fair-blazing and the vestment warm;
In vain his little children, peeping out
Into the mingling storm, demand their sire,
With tears of artless innocence. Alas!
Nor wife nor children more shall he behold,
Nor friends nor sacred home: on every nerve
The deadly Winter seizes, shuts up sense,
And, o'er his inmost vitals creeping cold,
Lays him along the snows a stiffened corse,
Stretched out and bleaching in the northern blast.

1725. 1726.

FROM

SUMMER

Now swarms the village o'er the joyful mead:
The rustic youth, brown with meridian toil,
Healthful and strong; full as the summer rose
Blown by prevailing suns, the ruddy maid,
Half naked, swelling on the sight, and all
Her kindled graces burning o'er her cheek;
Even stooping age is here; and infant hands
Trail the long rake, or, with the fragrant load
O'ercharged, amid the kind oppression roll.
Wide flies the tedded grain; all in a row
Advancing broad, or wheeling round the field,
They spread the breathing harvest to the sun,
That throws refreshful round a rural smell:
Or, as they rake the green-appearing ground,
And drive the dusky wave along the mead,
The russet hay-cock rises thick behind,
In order gay: while, heard from dale to dale,
Waking the breeze, resounds the blended voice
Of happy labour, love, and social glee.

Or, rushing thence in one diffusive band,
They drive the troubled flocks, by many a dog
Compelled, to where the mazy-running brook
Forms a deep pool, this bank abrupt and high,
And that fair-spreading in a pebbled shore.
Urged to the giddy brink, much is the toil,
The clamour much, of men and boys and dogs,

Ere the soft fearful people to the flood
Commit their woolly sides; and oft the swain,
On some impatient seizing, hurls them in:
Emboldened then, nor hesitating more,
Fast, fast they plunge amid the flashing wave,
And, panting, labour to the farther shore.
Repeated this, till deep the well-washed fleece
Has drunk the flood, and from his lively haunt
The trout is banished by the sordid stream,
Heavy and dripping, to the breezy brow
Slow move the harmless race; where, as they spread
Their swelling treasures to the sunny ray,
Inly disturbed, and wondering what this wild
Outrageous tumult means, their loud complaints
The country fill, and, tossed from rock to rock,
Incessant bleatings run around the hills.
At last, of snowy white, the gathered flocks
Are in the wattled pen innumerous pressed,
Head above head; and, ranged in lusty rows,
The shepherds sit and whet the sounding shears.
The housewife waits to roll her fleecy stores,
With all her gay-drest maids attending round:
One, chief, in gracious dignity enthroned,
Shines o'er the rest, the pastoral queen, and rays
Her smiles, sweet-beaming, on her shepherd-king,
While the glad circle round them yield their souls
To festive mirth and wit that knows no gall.
Meantime their joyous task goes on apace:
Some, mingling, stir the melted tar, and some
Deep on the new-shorn vagrant's heaving side
To stamp his master's cipher ready stand;
Others the unwilling wether drag along;
And, glorying in his might, the sturdy boy
Holds by the twisted horns th' indignant ram.
Behold where, bound and of its robe bereft
By needy man, that all-depending lord,
How meek, how patient the mild creature lies!
What softness in its melancholy face,
What dumb complaining innocence, appears!
Fear not, ye gentle tribes, 't is not the knife
Of horrid slaughter that is o'er you waved;

No, 't is the tender swain's well-guided shears,
Who having now, to pay his annual care,
Borrowed your fleece, to you a cumbrous load,
Will send you bounding to your hills again.
A simple scene: yet hence Britannia sees
Her solid grandeur rise; hence she commands
Th' exalted stores of every brighter clime,
The treasures of the sun without his rage;
Hence, fervent all, with culture, toil, and arts,
Wide glows her land; her dreadful thunder hence
Rides o'er the waves sublime, and now, even now,
Impending hangs o'er Gallia's humbled coast;
Hence rules the circling deep, and awes the world.
'T is raging noon; and, vertical, the sun
Darts on the head direct his forceful rays.
O'er heaven and earth, far as the ranging eye
Can sweep, a dazzling deluge reigns, and all
From pole to pole is undistinguished blaze.
In vain the sight, dejected to the ground,
Stoops for relief; thence hot-ascending steams
And keen reflection pain. Deep to the root
Of vegetation parched, the cleaving fields
And slippery lawn an arid hue disclose,
Blast Fancy's bloom, and wither even the soul.
Echo no more returns the cheerful sound
Of sharpening scythe; the mower, sinking, heaps
O'er him the humid hay, with flowers perfumed;
And scarce a chirping grasshopper is heard
Through the dumb mead. Distressful Nature pants.
The very streams look languid from afar,
Or through th' unsheltered glade, impatient, seem
To hurl into the covert of the grove.
All-conquering Heat, oh intermit thy wrath!
And on my throbbing temples, potent thus,
Beam not so fierce! Incessant still you flow,
And still another fervent flood succeeds,
Poured on the head profuse. In vain I sigh,
And restless turn, and look around for night:
Night is far off, and hotter hours approach.
Thrice happy he who on the sunless side
Of a romantic mountain, forest-crowned,

Beneath the whole collected shade reclines,
Or in the gelid caverns, woodbine-wrought
And fresh bedewed with ever-sprouting streams,
Sits coolly calm, while all the world without,
Unsatisfied and sick, tosses in noon:
Emblem instructive of the virtuous man,
Who keeps his tempered mind serene and pure,
And every passion aptly harmonized,
Amid a jarring world with vice inflamed.

. . . . . .

How changed the scene! In blazing height of noon
The sun, oppressed, is plunged in thickest gloom;
Still horror reigns, a dreary twilight round
Of struggling night and day malignant mixed;
For, to the hot equator crowding fast,
Where, highly rarefied, the yielding air
Admits their stream, incessant vapours roll—
Amazing clouds on clouds continual heaped,
Or whirled tempestuous by the gusty wind,
Or silent borne along, heavy and slow,
With the big stores of steaming oceans charged.
Meantime, amid these upper seas, condensed
Around the cold aërial mountain's brow
And by conflicting winds together dashed,
The Thunder holds his black tremendous throne;
From cloud to cloud the rending lightnings rage;
Till, in the furious elemental war
Dissolved, the whole precipitated mass
Unbroken floods and solid torrents pour.

1726. 1727.

FROM

SPRING

Come, gentle Spring, ethereal mildness, come!
And from the bosom of yon dropping cloud,
While music wakes around, veiled in a shower
Of shadowing roses, on our plains descend!
O Hertford, fitted or to shine in courts
With unaffected grace, or walk the plain
With Innocence and Meditation joined

In soft assemblage, listen to my song,
Which thy own season paints, when Nature all
Is blooming and benevolent, like thee.
And see where surly Winter passes off,
Far to the north, and calls his ruffian blasts:
His blasts obey, and quit the howling hill,
The shattered forest, and the ravaged vale;
While softer gales succeed, at whose kind touch—
Dissolving snows in livid torrents lost—
The mountains lift their green heads to the sky.
As yet the trembling year is unconfirmed,
And Winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,
Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving sleets
Deform the day delightless; so that scarce
The bittern knows his time, with bill engulfed,
To shake the sounding marsh, or from the shore
The plovers when to scatter o'er the heath
And sing their wild notes to the listening waste.
At last from Aries rolls the bounteous sun,
And the bright Bull receives him. Then no more
Th' expansive atmosphere is cramped with cold,
But, full of life and vivifying soul,
Lifts the light clouds sublime and spreads them thin,
Fleecy and white, o'er all-surrounding heaven;
Forth fly the tepid airs, and, unconfined,
Unbinding earth, the moving softness strays.
Joyous, th' impatient husbandman perceives
Relenting Nature, and his lusty steers
Drives from their stalls, to where the well-used plough
Lies in the furrow, loosened from the frost;
There, unrefusing, to the harnessed yoke
They lend their shoulder, and begin their toil,
Cheered by the simple song and soaring lark;
Meanwhile incumbent o'er the shining share
The master leans, removes th' obstructing clay,
Winds the whole work, and sidelong lays the glebe.
White through the neighbouring fields the sower stalks,
With measured step, and liberal throws the grain
Into the faithful bosom of the ground;
The harrow follows harsh, and shuts the scene.
Be gracious, Heaven! for now laborious man

Has done his part. Ye fostering breezes, blow!
Ye softening dews, ye tender showers, descend!
And temper all, thou world-reviving sun,
Into the perfect year! Nor ye who live
In luxury and ease, in pomp and pride,
Think these lost themes unworthy of your ear.
Such themes as these the rural Maro sung
To wide-imperial Rome, in the full height
Of elegance and taste, by Greece refined.
In ancient times, the sacred plough employed
The kings and awful fathers of mankind;
And some, with whom compared your insect tribes
Are but the beings of a summer's day,
Have held the scale of empire, ruled the storm
Of mighty war, then with victorious hand,
Disdaining little delicacies, seized
The plough, and, greatly independent, scorned
All the vile stores corruption can bestow.
Ye generous Britons, venerate the plough;
And o'er your hills and long-withdrawing vales
Let Autumn spread his treasures to the sun,
Luxuriant and unbounded! As the sea,
Far through his azure, turbulent domain,
Your empire owns, and from a thousand shores
Wafts all the pomp of life into your ports,
So with superior boon may your rich soil,
Exuberant, Nature's better blessings pour
O'er every land, the naked nations clothe,
And be th' exhaustless granary of a world.
Nor only through the lenient air this change,
Delicious, breathes: the penetrative sun,
His force deep-darting to the dark retreat
Of vegetation, sets the steaming power
At large, to wander o'er the verdant earth,
In various hues—but chiefly thee, gay green!
Thou smiling Nature's universal robe,
United light and shade, where the sight dwells
With growing strength and ever new delight.
From the moist meadow to the withered hill,
Led by the breeze, the vivid verdure runs,
And swells and deepens to the cherished eye.

The hawthorn whitens; and the juicy groves
Put forth their buds, unfolding by degrees,
Till the whole leafy forest stands displayed
In full luxuriance to the sighing gales,
Where the deer rustle through the twining brake,
And the birds sing concealed. At once, arrayed
In all the colours of the flushing year
By Nature's swift and secret-working hand,
The garden glows, and fills the liberal air
With lavished fragrance, while the promised fruit
Lies yet a little embryo, unperceived,
Within its crimson folds. Now from the town,
Buried in smoke and sleep and noisome damps,
Oft let me wander o'er the dewy fields,
Where freshness breathes, and dash the trembling drops
From the bent bush, as through the verdant maze
Of sweet-briar hedges I pursue my walk;
Or taste the smell of dairy; or ascend
Some eminence, Augusta, in thy plains,
And see the country, far diffused around,
One boundless blush, one white-empurpled shower
Of mingled blossoms, where the raptured eye
Hurries from joy to joy, and, hid beneath
The fair profusion, yellow Autumn spies.

1728.

FROM

AUTUMN

But see! the fading many-coloured woods,
Shade deepening over shade, the country round
Imbrown, a crowded umbrage, dusk and dun,
Of every hue from wan declining green
To sooty dark. These now the lonesome Muse,
Low-whispering, lead into their leaf-strown walks,
And give the season in its latest view.
Meantime, light-shadowing all, a sober calm
Fleeces unbounded ether, whose least wave
Stands tremulous, uncertain where to turn
The gentle current, while, illumined wide,
The dewy-skirted clouds imbibe the sun,
And through their lucid veil his softened force

Shed o'er the peaceful world. Then is the time,
For those whom wisdom and whom Nature charm,
To steal themselves from the degenerate crowd,
And soar above this little scene of things,
To tread low-thoughted Vice beneath their feet,
To soothe the throbbing passions into peace,
And woo lone Quiet in her silent walks.
Thus solitary, and in pensive guise,
Oft let me wander o'er the russet mead
And through the saddened grove, where scarce is heard
One dying strain to cheer the woodman's toil.
Haply some widowed songster pours his plaint,
Far, in faint warblings, through the tawny copse;
While congregated thrushes, linnets, larks,
And each wild throat whose artless strains so late
Swelled all the music of the swarming shades,
Robbed of their tuneful souls, now shivering sit
On the dead tree, a dull despondent flock,
With not a brightness waving o'er their plumes,
And naught save chattering discord in their note.
Oh, let not, aimed from some inhuman eye,
The gun the music of the coming year
Destroy, and harmless, unsuspecting harm,
Lay the weak tribes a miserable prey,
In mingled murder fluttering on the ground!
The pale descending year, yet pleasing still,
A gentler mood inspires: for now the leaf
Incessant rustles from the mournful grove,
Oft startling such as, studious, walk below,
And slowly circles through the waving air;
But should a quicker breeze amid the boughs
Sob, o'er the sky the leafy deluge streams,
Till, choked and matted with the dreary shower,
The forest walks, at every rising gale,
Roll wide the withered waste and whistle bleak.
Fled is the blasted verdure of the fields,
And, shrunk into their beds, the flowery race
Their sunny robes resign; even what remained
Of stronger fruits fall from the naked tree;
And woods, fields, gardens, orchards, all around,
The desolated prospect thrills the soul.

1730.

FROM

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE

O mortal man, who livest here by toil,
Do not complain of this thy hard estate:
That like an emmet thou must ever moil
Is a sad sentence of an ancient date;
And certes there is for it reason great,
For though sometimes it makes thee weep and wail,
And curse thy star, and early drudge and late,
Withouten that would come an heavier bale—
Loose life, unruly passions, and diseases pale.

In lowly dale, fast by a river's side,
With woody hill o'er hill encompassed round,
A most enchanting wizard did abide,
Than whom a fiend more fell is nowhere found.
It was, I ween, a lovely spot of ground;
And there a season atween June and May,
Half prankt with spring, with summer half imbrowned,
A listless climate made, where, sooth to say,
No living wight could work, ne carèd even for play.

Was naught around but images of rest:
Sleep-soothing groves, and quiet lawns between;
And flowery beds that slumbrous influence kest,
From poppies breathed; and beds of pleasant green,
Where never yet was creeping creature seen.
Meantime unnumbered glittering streamlets played,
And hurlèd everywhere their waters sheen,
That, as they bickered through the sunny glade,
Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur made.

Joined to the prattle of the purling rills,
Were heard the lowing herds along the vale,
And flocks loud-bleating from the distant hills,
And vacant shepherds piping in the dale;
And now and then sweet Philomel would wail,
Or stock-doves plain amid the forest deep,
That drowsy rustled to the sighing gale;
And still a coil the grasshopper did keep:
Yet all these sounds, yblent, inclinèd all to sleep.

Full in the passage of the vale, above,
A sable, silent, solemn forest stood,
Where naught but shadowy forms was seen to move,
As Idless fancied in her dreaming mood;
And up the hills, on either side, a wood
Of blackening pines, ay waving to and fro,
Sent forth a sleepy horror through the blood;
And where this valley winded out, below,
The murmuring main was heard, and scarcely heard, to flow.

A pleasing land of drowsy-hed it was:
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
Forever flushing round a summer sky.
There eke the soft delights, that witchingly
Instil a wanton sweetness through the breast,
And the calm pleasures, always hovered nigh;
But whate'er smacked of noyance or unrest
Was far, far off expelled from this delicious nest.

The landskip such, inspiring perfect ease,
Where Indolence (for so the wizard hight)
Close-hid his castle mid embowering trees,
That half shut out the beams of Phœbus bright,
And made a kind of checkered day and night.
Meanwhile, unceasing at the massy gate,
Beneath a spacious palm, the wicked wight
Was placed; and, to his lute, of cruel fate
And labour harsh complained, lamenting man's estate.

Thither continual pilgrims crowded still,
From all the roads of earth that pass there by;
For, as they chaunced to breathe on neighbouring hill,
The freshness of this valley smote their eye,
And drew them ever and anon more nigh,
Till clustering round th' enchanter false they hung,
Ymolten with his syren melody,
While o'er th' enfeebling lute his hand he flung,
And to the trembling chords these tempting verses sung:

"Behold, ye pilgrims of this earth, behold!
See all but man with unearned pleasure gay!

See her bright robes the butterfly unfold,
Broke from her wintry tomb in prime of May.
What youthful bride can equal her array?
Who can with her for easy pleasure vie?
From mead to mead with gentle wing to stray,
From flower to flower on balmy gales to fly,
Is all she has to do beneath the radiant sky.

"Behold the merry minstrels of the morn,
The swarming songsters of the careless grove,
Ten thousand throats that, from the flowering thorn,
Hymn their good God and carol sweet of love,
Such grateful kindly raptures them emove!
They neither plough nor sow; ne, fit for flail,
E'er to the barn the nodding sheaves they drove;
Yet theirs each harvest dancing in the gale,
Whatever crowns the hill or smiles along the vale.

"Outcast of Nature, man! the wretched thrall
Of bitter-dropping sweat, of sweltry pain,
Of cares that eat away thy heart with gall,
And of the vices, an inhuman train,
That all proceed from savage thirst of gain:
For when hard-hearted Interest first began
To poison earth, Astræa left the plain;
Guile, violence, and murder seized on man,
And, for soft milky streams, with blood the rivers ran.

. . . . . .

"O grievous folly! to heap up estate,
Losing the days you see beneath the sun;
When, sudden, comes blind unrelenting Fate,
And gives th' untasted portion you have won,
With ruthless toil and many a wretch undone,
To those who mock you, gone to Pluto's reign,
There with sad ghosts to pine, and shadows dun.
But sure it is of vanities most vain
To toil for what you here, untoiling, may obtain."

He ceased. But still their trembling ears retained
The deep vibrations of his witching song,
That, by a kind of magic power, constrained

To enter in, pell-mell, the listening throng:
Heaps poured on heaps, and yet they slipped along
In silent ease; as when beneath the beam
Of summer moons, the distant woods among,
Or by some flood all silvered with the gleam,
The soft-embodied fays through airy portal stream.

By the smooth demon so it ordered was,
And here his baneful bounty first began,
Though some there were who would not further pass,
And his alluring baits suspected han—
The wise distrust the too fair-spoken man:
Yet through the gate they cast a wishful eye;
Not to move on, perdie, is all they can,
For do their very best they cannot fly,
But often each way look and often sorely sigh.

When this the watchful wicked wizard saw,
With sudden spring he leaped upon them strait;
And, soon as touched by his unhallowed paw,
They found themselves within the cursèd gate,
Full hard to be repassed, like that of Fate:
Not stronger were of old the giant crew
Who sought to pull high Jove from regal state;
Though feeble wretch he seemed, of sallow hue,
Certes, who bides his grasp will that encounter rue.

. . . . . .

Waked by the crowd, slow from his bench arose
A comely full-spred porter, swoln with sleep:
His calm, broad, thoughtless aspect breathed repose,
And in sweet torpor he was plungèd deep,
Ne could himself from ceaseless yawning keep,
While o'er his eyes the drowsy liquor ran,
Through which his half-waked soul would faintly peep;
Then, taking his black staff, he called his man,
And roused himself as much as rouse himself he can.

The lad leaped lightly at his master's call:
He was, to weet, a little roguish page,
Save sleep and play who minded naught at all,
Like most the untaught striplings of his age.

This boy he kept each band to disengage,
Garters and buckles, task for him unfit,
But ill becoming his grave personage,
And which his portly paunch would not permit;
So this same limber page to all performèd it.

Meantime the master-porter wide displayed
Great store of caps, of slippers, and of gowns;
Wherewith he those who entered in arrayed,
Loose as the breeze that plays along the downs
And waves the summer woods when evening frowns:
Oh fair undress, best dress! it checks no vein,
But every flowing limb in pleasure drowns,
And heightens ease with grace. This done, right fain
Sir Porter sat him down, and turned to sleep again.

Thus easy robed, they to the fountain sped
That in the middle of the court up-threw
A stream, high-spouting from its liquid bed,
And falling back again in drizzly dew;
There each deep draughts, as deep he thirsted, drew:
It was a fountain of nepenthe rare,
Whence, as Dan Homer sings, huge pleasaunce grew,
And sweet oblivion of vile earthly care,
Fair gladsome waking thoughts, and joyous dreams more fair.

This rite performed, all inly pleased and still,
Withouten tromp was proclamation made:
"Ye sons of Indolence, do what you will,
And wander where you list through hall or glade;
Be no man's pleasure for another stayed;
Let each as likes him best his hours employ,
And cursed be he who minds his neighbour's trade!
Here dwells kind Ease and unreproving Joy:
He little merits bliss who others can annoy."

Strait of these endless numbers, swarming round
As thick as idle motes in sunny ray,
Not one eftsoons in view was to be found,
But every man strolled off his own glad way:
Wide o'er this ample court's blank area,

With all the lodges that thereto pertained,
No living creature could be seen to stray;
While solitude and perfect silence reigned,
So that to think you dreamt you almost was constrained.

. . . . . .

The doors, that knew no shrill alarming bell
Ne cursèd knocker plied by villain's hand,
Self-opened into halls, where who can tell
What elegance and grandeur wide expand,
The pride of Turkey and of Persia land?—
Soft quilts on quilts, on carpets carpets spread,
And couches stretch around in seemly band,
And endless pillows rise to prop the head;
So that each spacious room was one full-swelling bed.

And everywhere huge covered tables stood,
With wines high-flavoured and rich viands crowned;
Whatever sprightly juice or tasteful food
On the green bosom of this earth are found,
And all old ocean genders in his round:
Some hand unseen these silently displayed,
Even undemanded by a sign or sound;
You need but wish, and, instantly obeyed,
Fair-ranged the dishes rose, and thick the glasses played.

Here freedom reigned, without the least alloy;
Nor gossip's tale, nor ancient maiden's gall,
Nor saintly spleen, durst murmur at our joy,
And with envenomed tongue our pleasures pall:
For why? there was but one great rule for all,
To wit, that each should work his own desire,
And eat, drink, study, sleep, as it may fall,
Or melt the time in love, or wake the lyre,
And carol what, unbid, the Muses might inspire.

The rooms with costly tapestry were hung,
Where was inwoven many a gentle tale,
Such as of old the rural poets sung
Or of Arcadian or Sicilian vale:
Reclining lovers, in the lonely dale,
Poured forth at large the sweetly tortured heart,

Or, looking tender passion, swelled the gale,
And taught charmed Echo to resound their smart,
While flocks, woods, streams, around, repose and peace
impart.

Those pleased the most, where, by a cunning hand,
Depainted was the patriarchal age:
What time Dan Abraham left the Chaldee land,
And pastured on from verdant stage to stage,
Where fields and fountains fresh could best engage.
Toil was not then; of nothing took they heed
But with wild beasts the sylvan war to wage,
And o'er vast plains their herds and flocks to feed:
Blest sons of Nature they! true Golden Age indeed!

Sometimes the pencil, in cool airy halls,
Bade the gay bloom of vernal landskips rise,
Or autumn's varied shades imbrown the walls;
Now the black tempest strikes the astonished eyes;
Now down the steep the flashing torrent flies;
The trembling sun now plays o'er ocean blue,
And now rude mountains frown amid the skies:
Whate'er Lorraine light-touched with softening hue,
Or savage Rosa dashed, or learnèd Poussin drew.

Each sound, too, here to languishment inclined,
Lulled the weak bosom, and inducèd ease.
Aëreal music in the warbling wind,
At distance rising oft, by small degrees
Nearer and nearer came, till o'er the trees
It hung and breathed such soul-dissolving airs
As did, alas! with soft perdition please:
Intangled deep in its enchanting snares,
The listening heart forgot all duties and all cares.

A certain music, never known before,
Here lulled the pensive, melancholy mind;
Full easily obtained: behoves no more
But sidelong to the gently waving wind
To lay the well-tuned instrument reclined;
From which, with airy flying fingers light,
Beyond each mortal touch the most refined,

The gods of winds drew sounds of deep delight—
Whence, with just cause, the harp of Æolus it hight.

Ah me! what hand can touch the string so fine?
Who up the lofty diapason roll
Such sweet, such sad, such solemn airs divine,
Then let them down again into the soul?
Now rising love they fanned; now pleasing dole
They breathed, in tender musings, through the heart;
And now a graver sacred strain they stole,
As when seraphic hands an hymn impart:
Wild-warbling Nature all, above the reach of Art!

Such the gay splendour, the luxurious state,
Of Caliphs old, who on the Tigris' shore,
In mighty Bagdat populous and great,
Held their bright court, where was of ladies store,
And verse, love, music still the garland wore:
When sleep was coy, the bard in waiting there
Cheered the lone midnight with the Muse's lore;
Composing music bade his dreams be fair,
And music lent new gladness to the morning air.

Near the pavilions where we slept, still ran
Soft-tinkling streams, and dashing waters fell,
And sobbing breezes sighed, and oft began
(So worked the wizard) wintry storms to swell
As heaven and earth they would together mell;
At doors and windows, threatening, seemed to call
The demons of the tempest, growling fell,
Yet the least entrance found they none at all:
Whence sweeter grew our sleep, secure in massy hall.

1736–48. 1748.

EDWARD YOUNG

FROM

LOVE OF FAME, THE UNIVERSAL PASSION

A PROPER IDLER

Narcissus the Tartarian club disclaims,
Nay, a Freemason with some terror names;

Omits no duty, nor can envy say
He missed, these many years, the church or play.
He makes no noise in Parliament, 't is true,
But pays his debts and visit, when 't is due.
His character and gloves are ever clean,
And then he can out-bow the bowing dean.
A smile eternal on his lip he wears,
Which equally the wise and worthless shares.
In gay fatigues this most undaunted chief,
Patient of idleness beyond belief,
Most charitably lends the town his face,
For ornament, in ev'ry public place:
As sure as cards, he to th' assembly comes,
And is the furniture of drawing-rooms;
When ombre calls, his hand and heart are free,
And, joined to two, he fails not—to make three.
Narcissus is the glory of his race,
For who does nothing with a better grace?

1725.

A POLITE WORSHIPPER

Lavinia is polite, but not profane,
To church as constant as to Drury Lane.
She decently, in form, pays Heaven its due,
And makes a civil visit to her pew.
Her lifted fan, to give a solemn air,
Conceals her face, which passes for a prayer;
Curtsies to curtsies then, with grace, succeed—
Not one the fair omits but at the creed.
Or if she joins the service, 't is to speak:
Through dreadful silence the pent heart might break;
Untaught to bear it, women talk away
To God himself, and fondly think they pray;
But sweet their accent, and their air refined,
For they 're before their Maker—and mankind:
When ladies once are proud of praying well,
Satan himself will toll the parish bell.

1728.

FROM

NIGHT THOUGHTS

NIGHT, SABLE GODDESS

Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep!
He, like the world, his ready visit pays
Where Fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes,
Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,
And lights on lids unsullied with a tear.

From short (as usual) and disturbed repose,
I wake: how happy they who wake no more!
Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.
I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams
Tumultuous, where my wrecked, desponding thought
From wave to wave of fancied misery
At random drove, her helm of reason lost;
Though now restored, 't is only change of pain,
A bitter change! severer for severe.
The day too short for my distress; and Night,
Even in the zenith of her dark domain,
Is sunshine to the colour of my fate.

Night, sable goddess! from her ebon throne,
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth
Her leaden scepter o'er a slumbering world.
Silence how dead! and darkness how profound!
Nor eye nor list'ning ear an object finds:
Creation sleeps. 'T is as the general pulse
Of life stood still, and Nature made a pause,
An awful pause, prophetic of her end.
And let her prophecy be soon fulfilled!
Fate, drop the curtain! I can lose no more.

Silence and Darkness, solemn sisters, twins
From ancient Night, who nurse the tender thought
To reason, and on reason build resolve
(That column of true majesty in man),
Assist me! I will thank you in the grave,
The grave your kingdom; there this frame shall fall
A victim sacred to your dreary shrine.
But what are ye?—

Thou Who didst put to flight
Primeval Silence, when the morning stars,

Exulting, shouted o'er the rising ball,
O Thou Whose word from solid darkness struck
That spark, the sun, strike wisdom from my soul!
My soul, which flies to Thee, her trust, her treasure,
As misers to their gold, while others rest.
Through this opaque of Nature and of soul,
This double night, transmit one pitying ray,
To lighten and to cheer! O lead my mind
(A mind that fain would wander from its woe),
Lead it through various scenes of life and death,
And from each scene the noblest truths inspire!
Nor less inspire my conduct than my song:
Teach my best reason, reason; my best will,
Teach rectitude; and fix my firm resolve
Wisdom to wed and pay her long arrear;
Nor let the vial of thy vengeance, poured
On this devoted head, be poured in vain!

THE THIEF OF TIME

By Nature's law, what may be, may be now;
There 's no prerogative in human hours.
In human hearts what bolder thought can rise
Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?
Where is to-morrow? in another world:
For numbers this is certain; the reverse
Is sure to none; and yet on this "perhaps,"
This "peradventure," infamous for lies,
As on a rock of adamant we build
Our mountain hopes, spin out eternal schemes
As we the Fatal Sisters could out-spin,
And, big with life's futurities, expire.
Not even Philander had bespoke his shroud,
Nor had he cause—a warning was denied:
How many fall as sudden, not as safe;
As sudden, though for years admonished home.
Of human ills the last extreme beware,
Beware, Lorenzo, a slow-sudden death!
How dreadful that deliberate surprise!
Be wise to-day; 't is madness to defer:
Next day the fatal precedent will plead;
Thus on, till wisdom is pushed out of life.

Procrastination is the thief of time;
Year after year it steals, till all are fled,
And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal scene.
If not so frequent, would not this be strange?
That 't is so frequent, this is stranger still.

1742.

ROBERT BLAIR

FROM

THE GRAVE

While some affect the sun, and some the shade,
Some flee the city, some the hermitage,
Their aims as various as the roads they take
In journeying through life, the task be mine
To paint the gloomy horrors of the tomb,
Th' appointed place of rendezvous, where all
These trav'llers meet. Thy succours I implore,
Eternal King! whose potent arm sustains
The keys of hell and death.—The Grave, dread thing!
Men shiver when thou 'rt named: Nature, appalled,
Shakes off her wonted firmness. Ah, how dark
Thy long-extended realms and rueful wastes!
Where naught but silence reigns, and night, dark night,
Dark as was chaos ere the infant sun
Was rolled together or had tried his beams
Athwart the gloom profound. The sickly taper
By glimm'ring through thy low-browed misty vaults,
Furred round with mouldy damps and ropy slime,
Lets fall a supernumerary horror,
And only serves to make thy night more irksome.
Well do I know thee by thy trusty yew,
Cheerless, unsocial plant! that loves to dwell
Midst skulls and coffins, epitaphs and worms;
Where light-heeled ghosts and visionary shades,
Beneath the wan cold moon (as fame reports)
Embodied thick, perform their mystic rounds.
No other merriment, dull tree, is thine.

. . . . . .

On this side and on that, men see their friends
Drop off, like leaves in autumn, yet launch out
Into fantastic schemes, which the long livers
In the world's hale and undegenerate days
Could scarce have leisure for; fools that we are,
Never to think of death and of ourselves
At the same time! as if to learn to die
Were no concern of ours. O more than sottish!
For creatures of a day in gamesome mood
To frolic on eternity's dread brink,
Unapprehensive, when, for aught we know,
The very first swoln surge shall sweep us in!
Think we, or think we not, time hurries on
With a resistless unremitting stream,
Yet treads more soft than e'er did midnight thief,
That slides his hand under the miser's pillow
And carries off his prize. What is this world?
What but a spacious burial-field unwalled,
Strewed with Death's spoils, the spoils of animals
Savage and tame, and full of dead men's bones!
The very turf on which we tread once lived;
And we that live must lend our carcases
To cover our own offspring; in their turns
They too must cover theirs. 'T is here all meet:
The shiv'ring Icelander and sun-burnt Moor;
Men of all climes, that never met before,
And of all creeds, the Jew, the Turk, the Christian.
Here the proud prince, and favourite yet prouder,
His sov'reign's keeper and the people's scourge,
Are huddled out of sight! Here lie abashed
The great negotiators of the earth,
And celebrated masters of the balance,
Deep read in stratagems and wiles of courts:
Now vain their treaty-skill; Death scorns to treat.
Here the o'erloaded slave flings down his burden
From his galled shoulders; and when the stern tyrant,
With all his guards and tools of power about him,
Is meditating new unheard-of hardships,
Mocks his short arm, and, quick as thought, escapes
Where tyrants vex not and the weary rest.

1730–42. 1743.

SAMUEL JOHNSON

FROM

LONDON

Though grief and fondness in my breast rebel
When injured Thales bids the town farewell,
Yet still my calmer thoughts his choice commend
(I praise the hermit but regret the friend),
Resolved at length, from vice and London far,
To breathe in distant fields a purer air,
And, fixed on Cambria's solitary shore,
Give to St. David one true Briton more.
For who would leave, unbribed, Hibernia's land,
Or change the rocks of Scotland for the Strand?
There none are swept by sudden fate away,
But all whom hunger spares with age decay:
Here malice, rapine, accident conspire,
And now a rabble rages, now a fire;
Their ambush here relentless ruffians lay,
And here the fell attorney prowls for prey;
Here falling houses thunder on your head,
And here a female atheist talks you dead.

. . . . . .

By numbers here from shame or censure free,
All crimes are safe but hated poverty.
This, only this, the rigid law pursues;
This, only this, provokes the snarling Muse;
The sober trader at a tattered cloak
Wakes from his dream and labours for a joke;
With brisker air the silken courtiers gaze,
And turn the varied taunt a thousand ways:
Of all the griefs that harass the distressed
Sure the most bitter is a scornful jest;
Fate never wounds more deep the gen'rous heart
Than when a blockhead's insult points the dart.

Has Heaven reserved, in pity to the poor,
No pathless waste or undiscovered shore?
No secret island in the boundless main?
No peaceful desert yet unclaimed by Spain?
Quick let us rise, the happy seats explore,

And bear Oppression's insolence no more.
This mournful truth is ev'rywhere confessed:
Slow rises worth, by poverty depressed;
But here more slow, where all are slaves to gold,
Where looks are merchandise, and smiles are sold,
Where, won by bribes, by flatteries implored,
The groom retails the favours of his lord.

1738. 1738.

FROM

THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES

Let Observation, with extensive view,
Survey mankind from China to Peru,
Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,
And watch the busy scenes of crowded life:
Then say how hope and fear, desire and hate,
O'erspread with snares the clouded maze of Fate,
Where wav'ring man, betrayed by vent'rous pride
To tread the dreary paths without a guide,
As treach'rous phantoms in the mist delude,
Shuns fancied ills or chases airy good;
How rarely reason guides the stubborn choice,
Rules the bold hand, or prompts the suppliant voice;
How nations sink, by darling schemes oppressed,
When Vengeance listens to the fool's request.
Fate wings with ev'ry wish th' afflictive dart,
Each gift of nature and each grace of art:
With fatal heat impetuous courage glows,
With fatal sweetness elocution flows,
Impeachment stops the speaker's pow'rful breath,
And restless fire precipitates on death.

. . . . . .

In full-blown dignity see Wolsey stand,
Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand:
To him the church, the realm, their pow'rs consign;
Through him the rays of regal bounty shine;
Turned by his nod the stream of honour flows;
His smile alone security bestows.
Still to new heights his restless wishes tow'r;
Claim leads to claim, and pow'r advances pow'r;
Till conquest unresisted ceased to please,

And rights submitted left him none to seize.
At length his sov'reign frowns—the train of state
Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate:
Where'er he turns he meets a stranger's eye;
His suppliants scorn him, and his followers fly;
Now drops at once the pride of awful state—
The golden canopy, the glitt'ring plate,
The regal palace, the luxurious board,
The liv'ried army, and the menial lord.
With age, with cares, with maladies oppressed,
He seeks the refuge of monastic rest.
Grief aids disease, remembered folly stings,
And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings.

. . . . . .

On what foundation stands the warror's pride,
How just his hopes, let Swedish Charles decide.
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire;
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquered lord of pleasure and of pain.
No joys to him pacific sceptres yield—
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;
Behold surrounding kings their pow'rs combine,
And one capitulate, and one resign:
Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;
"Think nothing gained," he cries, "till naught remain!
On Moscow's walls till Gothic standards fly,
And all be mine beneath the polar sky!"
The march begins in military state,
And nations on his eye suspended wait.
Stern Famine guards the solitary coast,
And Winter barricades the realms of Frost.
He comes; nor want nor cold his course delay—
Hide, blushing Glory, hide Pultowa's day!
The vanquished hero leaves his broken bands,
And shows his miseries in distant lands,
Condemned a needy supplicant to wait
While ladies interpose and slaves debate.
But did not Chance at length her error mend?
Did no subverted empire mark his end?
Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound,

Or hostile millions press him to the ground?
His fall was destined to a barren strand,
A petty fortress, and a dubious hand.
He left the name at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral or adorn a tale.

. . . . . .

Where, then, shall Hope and Fear their objects find?
Must dull suspense corrupt the stagnant mind?
Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?
Must no dislike alarm, no wishes rise,
No cries invoke the mercies of the skies?
Enquirer, cease; petitions yet remain
Which Heav'n may hear. Nor deem religion vain:
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
But leave to Heav'n the measure and the choice,
Safe in His pow'r Whose eyes discern afar
The secret ambush of a specious pray'r;
Implore His aid, in His decisions rest,
Secure, whate'er He gives, He gives the best.
Yet when the sense of Sacred Presence fires,
And strong devotion to the skies aspires,
Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
Obedient passions, and a will resigned;
For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
For patience, sov'reign o'er transmuted ill;
For faith, that, panting for a happier seat,
Counts death kind Nature's signal of retreat:
These goods for man the laws of Heav'n ordain;
These goods He grants Who grants the pow'r to gain;
With these celestial Wisdom calms the mind,
And makes the happiness she does not find.

1748? 1749.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE

FROM

THE SCHOOLMISTRESS

In ev'ry village marked with little spire,
Embow'red in trees, and hardly known to fame,

There dwells, in lowly shed and mean attire,
A matron old, whom we schoolmistress name,
Who boasts unruly brats with birch to tame;
They grieven sore, in piteous durance pent,
Awed by the pow'r of this relentless dame,
And ofttimes, on vagaries idly bent,
For unkempt hair or task unconned are sorely shent.

And all in sight doth rise a birchen tree,
Which Learning near her little dome did stowe;
Whilom a twig of small regard to see,
Though now so wide its waving branches flow,
And work the simple vassals mickle woe—
For not a wind might curl the leaves that blew
But their limbs shuddered and their pulse beat low,
And as they looked they found their horror grew,
And shaped it into rods, and tingled at the view.

. . . . . .

One ancient hen she took delight to feed,
The plodding pattern of the busy dame;
Which, ever and anon, impelled by need,
Into her school, begirt with chickens, came—
Such favour did her past deportment claim,—
And if neglect had lavished on the ground
Fragment of bread, she would collect the same,
For well she knew, and quaintly could expound,
What sin it were to waste the smallest crumb she found.

. . . . . .

In elbow chair, like that of Scottish stem
By the sharp tooth of cank'ring eld defaced,
In which, when he receives his diadem,
Our sov'reign prince and liefest liege is placed,
The matron sate; and some with rank she graced
(The source of children's and of courtier's pride!),
Redressed affronts—for vile affronts there passed,—
And warned them not the fretful to deride,
But love each other dear whatever them betide.

Right well she knew each temper to descry:
To thwart the proud, and the submiss to raise;
Some with vile copper prize exalt on high,
And some entice with pittance small of praise;
And other some with baleful sprig she 'frays.
Ev'n absent, she the reins of pow'r doth hold,
While with quaint arts the giddy crowd she sways,
Forewarned, if little bird their pranks behold,
'T will whisper in her ear and all the scene unfold.

Lo, now with state she utters the command!
Eftsoons the urchins to their tasks repair:
Their books of stature small they take in hand,
Which with pellucid horn securèd are,
To save from finger wet the letters fair;
The work so gay, that on their back is seen,
St. George's high atchievements does declare,
On which thilk wight that has y-gazing been
Kens the forth-coming rod—unpleasing sight, I ween!

Ah, luckless he, and born beneath the beam
Of evil star! it irks me whilst I write;
As erst the bard by Mulla's silver stream,
Oft, as he told of deadly dolorous plight,
Sighed as he sung, and did in tears indite:
For, brandishing the rod, she doth begin
To loose the brogues, the stripling's late delight,
And down they drop; appears his dainty skin,
Fair as the furry coat of whitest ermilin.

O ruthful scene! when from a nook obscure
His little sister doth his peril see,
All playful as she sate she grows demure;
She finds full soon her wonted spirits flee;
She meditates a pray'r to set him free:
Nor gentle pardon could this dame deny
(If gentle pardon could with dames agree)
To her sad grief that swells in either eye,
And wrings her so that all for pity she could die.

No longer can she now her shrieks command;
And hardly she forbears, through aweful fear,

To rushen forth and with presumptuous hand
To stay harsh justice in its mid career.
On thee she calls, on thee, her parent dear!
(Ah, too remote to ward the shameful blow!)
She sees no kind domestic visage near,
And soon a flood of tears begins to flow,
And gives a loose at last to unavailing woe.

But ah, what pen his piteous plight may trace,
Or what device his loud laments explain—
The form uncouth of his disguisèd face,
The pallid hue that dyes his looks amain,
The plenteous show'r that does his cheek distain,—
When he, in abject wise, implores the dame,
Ne hopeth aught of sweet reprieve to gain,
Or when from high she levels well her aim,
And through the thatch his cries each falling stroke proclaim?

The other tribe, aghast, with sore dismay
Attend, and conn their tasks with mickle care;
By turns, astonied, ev'ry twig survey,
And from their fellow's hateful wounds beware,
Knowing, I wist, how each the same may share;
Till fear has taught them a performance meet,
And to the well-known chest the dame repair,
Whence oft with sugared cates she doth 'em greet,
And ginger-bread y-rare—now, certes, doubly sweet!

1736. 1737.

WILLIAM COLLINS

FROM

ORIENTAL ECLOGUES

ECLOGUE II

HASSAN, OR THE CAMEL-DRIVER

Scene, the desert. *Time,* mid-day.

In silent horror o'er the boundless waste
The driver Hassan with his camels passed:
One cruse of water on his back he bore,

And his light scrip contained a scanty store;
A fan of painted feathers in his hand,
To guard his shaded face from scorching sand.
The sultry sun had gained the middle sky,
And not a tree and not an herb was nigh;
The beasts with pain their dusty way pursue,
Shrill roared the winds, and dreary was the view!
With desp'rate sorrow wild, th' affrighted man
Thrice sighed, thrice strook his breast, and thus began:
"Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
When first from Schiraz' walls I bent my way!

"Ah, little thought I of the blasting wind,
The thirst or pinching hunger, that I find!
Bethink thee, Hassan, where shall Thirst assuage,
When fails this cruse, his unrelenting rage?
Soon shall this scrip its precious load resign;
Then what but tears and hunger shall be thine?
Ye mute companions of my toils, that bear
In all my griefs a more than equal share!
Here, where no springs in murmurs break away,
Or moss-crowned fountains mitigate the day,
In vain ye hope the green delights to know
Which plains more blest or verdant vales bestow;
Here rocks alone and tasteless sands are found,
And faint and sickly winds forever howl around.
Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
When first from Schiraz' walls I bent my way!

"Curst be the gold and silver which persuade
Weak men to follow far-fatiguing trade!
The lily peace outshines the silver store,
And life is dearer than the golden ore.
Yet money tempts us o'er the desert brown,
To ev'ry distant mart and wealthy town;
Full oft we tempt the land, and oft the sea;
And are we only yet repaid by thee?
Ah, why was ruin so attractive made,
Or why fond man so easily betrayed?
Why heed we not, whilst mad we haste along,
The gentle voice of Peace or Pleasure's song?

Or wherefore think the flow'ry mountain's side,
The fountain's murmurs, and the valley's pride,
Why think we these less pleasing to behold
Than dreary deserts if they lead to gold?
Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
When first from Schiraz' walls I bent my way!

"O cease, my fears!—all frantic as I go,
When thought creates unnumbered scenes of woe,
What if the lion in his rage I meet!—
Oft in the dust I view his printed feet:
And (fearful!) oft, when Day's declining light
Yields her pale empire to the mourner Night,
By hunger roused, he scours the groaning plain,
Gaunt wolves and sullen tigers in his train;
Before them Death with shrieks directs their way,
Fills the wild yell, and leads them to their prey.
Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
When first from Schiraz' walls I bent my way!

"At that dead hour the silent asp shall creep,
If aught of rest I find, upon my sleep;
Or some swoln serpent twist his scales around,
And wake to anguish with a burning wound.
Thrice happy they, the wise contented poor,
From lust of wealth and dread of death secure!
They tempt no deserts, and no griefs they find;
Peace rules the day, where reason rules the mind.
Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
When first from Schiraz' walls I bent my way!

"O hapless youth! for she thy love hath won,
The tender Zara, will be most undone!
Big swelled my heart, and owned the pow'rful maid,
When fast she dropped her tears, as thus she said:
'Farewell the youth whom sighs could not detain,
Whom Zara's breaking heart implored in vain!
Yet, as thou go'st, may ev'ry blast arise
Weak and unfelt as these rejected sighs!
Safe o'er the wild, no perils mayst thou see,
No griefs endure, nor weep, false youth, like me.'

O let me safely to the fair return,
Say, with a kiss, she must not, shall not mourn!
O let me teach my heart to lose its fears,
Recalled by Wisdom's voice and Zara's tears!"

He said, and called on Heav'n to bless the day
When back to Schiraz' walls he bent his way.

1738 or 1739. 1742.

FROM

AN EPISTLE

ADDRESSED TO SIR THOMAS HANMER ON HIS EDITION OF SHAKESPEAR'S WORKS

Each rising art by just gradation moves,
Toil builds on toil, and age on age improves;
The Muse alone unequal dealt her rage,
And graced with noblest pomp her earliest stage.
Preserved through time, the speaking scenes impart
Each changeful wish of Phædra's tortured heart;
Or paint the curse that marked the Theban's reign—
A bed incestuous, and a father slain.
With kind concern our pitying eyes o'erflow,
Trace the sad tale, and own another's woe.
To Rome removed, with wit secure to please,
The Comic Sisters kept their native ease;
With jealous fear declining Greece beheld
Her own Menander's art almost excelled.
But ev'ry Muse essayed to raise in vain
Some laboured rival of her tragic strain;
Ilissus' laurels, though transferred with toil,
Drooped their fair leaves, nor knew th' unfriendly soil.
As Arts expired, resistless Dulness rose;
Goths, priests, or Vandals—all were Learning's foes:
Till Julius first recalled each exiled maid,
And Cosmo owned them in th' Etrurian shade.
Then, deeply skilled in love's engaging theme,
The soft Provençal passed to Arno's stream;
With graceful ease the wanton lyre he strung,
Sweet flowed the lays—but love was all he sung;
The gay description could not fail to move,
For, led by nature, all are friends to love.

But Heav'n, still various in its works, decreed
The perfect boast of time should last succeed;
The beauteous union must appear, at length,
Of Tuscan fancy and Athenian strength;
One greater Muse Eliza's reign adorn,
And ev'n a Shakespear to her fame be born!
Yet, ah, so bright her morning's op'ning ray,
In vain our Britain hoped an equal day:
No second growth the western isle could bear,
At once exhausted with too rich a year.
Too nicely Jonson knew the critic's part;
Nature in him was almost lost in art.
Of softer mould the gentle Fletcher came,
The next in order as the next in name:
With pleased attention, 'midst his scenes we find
Each glowing thought that warms the female mind;
Each melting sigh and ev'ry tender tear,
The lover's wishes and the virgin's fear.
His ev'ry strain the Smiles and Graces own,
But stronger Shakespear felt for man alone;
Drawn by his pen, our ruder passions stand
Th' unrivalled picture of his early hand.
With gradual steps and slow, exacter France
Saw Art's fair empire o'er her shores advance;
By length of toil a bright perfection knew,
Correctly bold, and just in all she drew:
Till late Corneille, with Lucan's spirit fired,
Breathed the free strain, as Rome and he inspired;
And classic judgment gained to sweet Racine
The temp'rate strength of Maro's chaster line.
But wilder far the British laurel spread,
And wreaths less artful crown our poet's head.
Yet he alone to ev'ry scene could give
Th' historian's truth, and bid the manners live.

1743. 1743.

A SONG FROM SHAKESPEAR'S "CYMBELINE"

To fair Fidele's grassy tomb
Soft maids and village hinds shall bring
Each op'ning sweet of earliest bloom,
And rifle all the breathing spring.

No wailing ghost shall dare appear,
To vex with shrieks this quiet grove;
But shepherd lads assemble here,
And melting virgins own their love.

No withered witch shall here be seen,
No goblins lead their nightly crew;
The female fays shall haunt the green,
And dress thy grave with pearly dew.

The redbreast oft, at ev'ning hours,
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss and gathered flow'rs,
To deck the ground where thou art laid.

When howling winds and beating rain
In tempests shake the sylvan cell,
Or 'midst the chase, on ev'ry plain,
The tender thought on thee shall dwell.

Each lonely scene shall thee restore;
For thee the tear be duly shed;
Beloved till life could charm no more,
And mourned till Pity's self be dead.

1744.

ODE TO FEAR

STROPHE

Thou to whom the world unknown,
With all its shadowy shapes, is shown;
Who see'st, appalled, th' unreal scene,
While Fancy lifts the veil between;
Ah Fear! ah frantic Fear!
I see, I see thee near!
I know thy hurried step, thy haggard eye!
Like thee I start, like thee disordered fly,
For, lo, what monsters in thy train appear!
Danger, whose limbs of giant mould
What mortal eye can fixed behold?

Who stalks his round, an hideous form,
Howling amidst the midnight storm,
Or throws him on the ridgy steep
Of some loose hanging rock to sleep.
And with him thousand phantoms joined,
Who prompt to deeds accursed the mind;
And those, the fiends who, near allied,
O'er Nature's wounds and wrecks preside,
Whilst Vengeance, in the lurid air,
Lifts her red arm, exposed and bare;
On whom that rav'ning brood of Fate,
Who lap the blood of Sorrow, wait.
Who, Fear, this ghastly train can see,
And look not madly wild, like thee?

EPODE

In earliest Greece to thee, with partial choice,
The grief-full Muse addrest her infant tongue;
The maids and matrons on her awful voice,
Silent and pale, in wild amazement hung.

Yet he, the bard who first invoked thy name,
Disdained in Marathon its pow'r to feel;
For not alone he nursed the poet's flame,
But reached from Virtue's hand the patriot's steel.

But who is he whom later garlands grace,
Who left a while o'er Hybla's dews to rove,
With trembling eyes thy dreary steps to trace,
Where thou and Furies shared the baleful grove?

Wrapt in thy cloudy veil, th' incestuous queen
Sighed the sad call her son and husband heard,
When once alone it broke the silent scene,
And he, the wretch of Thebes, no more appeared.

O Fear, I know thee by my throbbing heart;
Thy with'ring pow'r inspired each mournful line;
Though gentle Pity claim her mingled part,
Yet all the thunders of the scene are thine!

ANTISTROPHE

Thou who such weary lengths hast passed,
Where wilt thou rest, mad nymph, at last?
Say, wilt thou shroud in haunted cell,
Where gloomy Rape and Murder dwell?
Or in some hollowed seat,
'Gainst which the big waves beat,
Hear drowning seamen's cries, in tempests brought?
Dark pow'r, with shudd'ring, meek, submitted thought
Be mine to read the visions old
Which thy awak'ning bards have told,
And, lest thou meet my blasted view,
Hold each strange tale devoutly true!
Ne'er be I found, by thee o'erawed,
In that thrice-hallowed eve abroad
When ghosts, as cottage maids believe,
Their pebbled beds permitted leave,
And goblins haunt, from fire, or fen,
Or mine, or flood, the walks of men!
O thou whose spirit most possest
The sacred seat of Shakespear's breast,
By all that from thy prophet broke,
In thy divine emotions spoke,
Hither again thy fury deal!
Teach me but once like him to feel,
His cypress wreath my meed decree,
And I, O Fear, will dwell with thee!

1746.

ODE TO SIMPLICITY

O thou by Nature taught
To breathe her genuine thought,
In numbers warmly pure and sweetly strong;
Who first, on mountains wild,
In Fancy, loveliest child,
Thy babe or Pleasure's, nursed the pow'rs of song!

Thou who with hermit heart
Disdain'st the wealth of art,
And gauds, and pageant weeds, and trailing pall;

But com'st a decent maid,
In Attic robe arrayed,
O chaste, unboastful nymph, to thee I call!

By all the honeyed store
On Hybla's thymy shore,
By all her blooms and mingled murmurs dear;
By her whose lovelorn woe,
In ev'ning musings slow,
Soothed sweetly sad Electra's poet's ear;

By old Cephisus deep,
Who spread his wavy sweep,
In warbled wand'rings round thy green retreat;
On whose enamelled side
When holy Freedom died,
No equal haunt allured thy future feet;

O sister meek of Truth,
To my admiring youth
Thy sober aid and native charms infuse!
The flow'rs that sweetest breathe,
Though Beauty culled the wreath,
Still ask thy hand to range their ordered hues.

While Rome could none esteem
But virtue's patriot theme,
You loved her hills, and led her laureate band;
But staid to sing alone
To one distinguished throne,
And turned thy face and fled her altered land.

No more, in hall or bow'r,
The passions own thy pow'r;
Love, only love, her forceless numbers mean:
For thou hast left her shrine;
Nor olive more, nor vine,
Shall gain thy feet to bless the servile scene.

Though taste, though genius bless
To some divine excess,
Faints the cold work till thou inspire the whole:

What each, what all supply,
May court, may charm our eye;
Thou, only thou, canst raise the meeting soul!

Of these let others ask,
To aid some mighty task;
I only seek to find thy temp'rate vale,
Where oft my reed might sound
To maids and shepherds round,
And all thy sons, O Nature, learn my tale.

1746.

ODE ON THE POETICAL CHARACTER

STROPHE

As once—if not with light regard
I read aright that gifted bard
(Him whose school above the rest
His loveliest Elfin Queen has blest)—
One, only one, unrivalled fair
Might hope the magic girdle wear,
At solemn tourney hung on high,
The wish of each love-darting eye;
Lo! to each other nymph in turn applied,
As if, in air unseen, some hov'ring hand,
Some chaste and angel friend to virgin fame,
With whispered spell had burst the starting band,
It left unblest her loathed, dishonoured side;
Happier, hopeless fair, if never
Her baffled hand, with vain endeavour,
Had touched that fatal zone to her denied!
Young Fancy thus, to me divinest name,
To whom, prepared and bathed in heav'n,
The cest of amplest pow'r is giv'n,
To few the godlike gift assigns
To gird their blest, prophetic loins,
And gaze her visions wild, and feel unmixed her flame!

EPODE

The band, as fairy legends say,
Was wove on that creating day

When He Who called with thought to birth
Yon tented sky, this laughing earth,
And drest with springs and forests tall,
And poured the main engirting all,
Long by the loved enthusiast wooed,
Himself in some diviner mood,
Retiring, sate with her alone,
And placed her on his sapphire throne,
The whiles, the vaulted shrine around,
Seraphic wires were heard to sound,
Now sublimest triumph swelling,
Now on love and mercy dwelling;
And she, from out the veiling cloud,
Breathed her magic notes aloud,
And thou, thou rich-haired Youth of Morn,
And all thy subject life, was born!
The dang'rous passions kept aloof,
Far from the sainted growing woof:
But near it sate ecstatic Wonder,
List'ning the deep applauding thunder;
And Truth, in sunny vest arrayed,
By whose the tarsel's eyes were made;
All the shad'wy tribes of mind,
In braided dance, their murmurs joined,
And all the bright uncounted pow'rs
Who feed on heav'n's ambrosial flow'rs.
Where is the bard whose soul can now
Its high presuming hopes avow?
Where he who thinks, with rapture blind,
This hallowed work for him designed?

ANTISTROPHE

High on some cliff, to heav'n up-piled,
Of rude access, of prospect wild,
Where, tangled round the jealous steep,
Strange shades o'erbrow the valleys deep,
And holy genii guard the rock,
Its glooms embrown, its springs unlock,
While on its rich ambitious head
An Eden, like his own, lies spread,
I view that oak, the fancied glades among,

By which as Milton lay, his ev'ning ear,
From many a cloud that dropped ethereal dew,
Nigh sphered in heav'n, its native strains could hear,
On which that ancient trump he reached was hung:
Thither oft, his glory greeting,
From Waller's myrtle shades retreating,
With many a vow from Hope's aspiring tongue,
My trembling feet his guiding steps pursue;
In vain—such bliss to one alone
Of all the sons of soul was known,
And Heav'n and Fancy, kindred pow'rs,
Have now o'erturned th' inspiring bow'rs,
Or curtained close such scene from ev'ry future view.

1746.

ODE

WRITTEN IN THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR 1746

How sleep the brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is wrung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honour comes, a pilgrim grey,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

1746. 1746.

ODE TO EVENING

If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs and dying gales,

O nymph reserved, while now the bright-haired sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed:

Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat,
With short, shrill shriek, flits by on leathern wing;
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum:
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some softened strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy dark'ning vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit,
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return!

For when thy folding-star, arising, shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
The fragrant Hours, and elves
Who slept in flow'rs the day,

And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge
And sheds the fresh'ning dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive Pleasures sweet,
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then lead, calm vot'ress, where some sheety lake
Cheers the lone heath, or some time-hallowed pile
Or upland fallows grey
Reflect its last cool gleam.

But when chill blust'ring winds or driving rain
Forbid my willing feet, be mine the hut
That from the mountain's side
Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires,
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his show'rs, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve;
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy ling'ring light;

While sallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves;
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes;

So long, sure-found beneath the sylvan shed,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, rose-lipped Health,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And hymn thy fav'rite name!

1746.

THE PASSIONS

AN ODE FOR MUSIC

When Music, heav'nly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
Thronged around her magic cell,
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possest beyond the Muse's painting;
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturbed, delighted, raised, refined:
Till once, 't is said, when all were fired,
Filled with fury, rapt, inspired,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatched her instruments of sound;
And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each (for madness ruled the hour)
Would prove his own expressive pow'r.

First Fear his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewildered laid,
And back recoiled, he knew not why,
Ev'n at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rushed: his eyes, on fire,
In lightnings owned his secret stings;
In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
And swept with hurried hand the strings.

With woful measures wan Despair
Low, sullen sounds his grief beguiled;
A solemn, strange, and mingled air—
'T was sad by fits, by starts 't was wild.

But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delightful measure?
Still it whispered promised pleasure,
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail!
Still would her touch the strain prolong;
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
She called on Echo still, through all the song;
And where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at ev'ry close,
And Hope, enchanted, smiled, and waved her golden hair.

And longer had she sung—but with a frown
Revenge impatient rose;
He threw his blood-stained sword in thunder down,
And with a with'ring look
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe.
And ever and anon he beat
The doubling drum with furious heat;
And though sometimes, each dreary pause between,
Dejected Pity, at his side,
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unaltered mien,
While each strained ball of sight seemed bursting from his head.
Thy numbers, Jealousy, to naught were fixed,
Sad proof of thy distressful state;
Of diff'ring themes the veering song was mixed,
And now it courted Love, now raving called on Hate.

With eyes upraised, as one inspired,
Pale Melancholy sate retired,
And from her wild sequestered seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Poured through the mellow horn her pensive soul;
And, dashing soft from rocks around,
Bubbling runnels joined the sound:
Through glades and glooms the mingled measure stole,
Or o'er some haunted stream, with fond delay,
Round an holy calm diffusing,
Love of peace and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

But O how altered was its sprightlier tone,
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
Her bow across her shoulder flung,
Her buskins gemmed with morning dew,
Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
The hunter's call, to faun and dryad known!
The oak-crowned sisters, and their chaste-eyed queen,
Satyrs, and sylvan boys, were seen,
Peeping from forth their alleys green;
Brown Exercise rejoiced to hear;
And Sport leapt up, and seized his beechen spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial:
He, with viny crown advancing,
First to the lively pipe his hand addrest;
But soon he saw the brisk awak'ning viol,
Whose sweet entrancing voice he loved the best.
They would have thought, who heard the strain,
They saw in Tempe's vale her native maids,
Amidst the festal-sounding shades,
To some unwearied minstrel dancing,
While, as his flying fingers kissed the strings,
Love framed with Mirth a gay fantastic round;
Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound,
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay,
Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.

O Music! sphere-descended maid!
Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid!
Why, goddess, why, to us denied,
Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
As in that loved Athenian bow'r
You learned an all-commanding pow'r,
Thy mimic soul, O nymph endeared,
Can well recall what then it heard.
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
Arise as in that elder time,
Warm, energic, chaste, sublime!
Thy wonders, in that godlike age,
Fill thy recording sister's page:
'T is said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age,
Ev'n all at once together found,
Cecilia's mingled world of sound.
O bid our vain endeavours cease:
Revive the just designs of Greece;
Return in all thy simple state;
Confirm the tales her sons relate!

1746.

AN ODE ON THE POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS OF THE HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND

CONSIDERED AS THE SUBJECT OF POETRY

I

H——, thou return'st from Thames, whose naiads long
Have seen thee ling'ring, with a fond delay,
'Mid those soft friends whose hearts, some future day,
Shall melt, perhaps, to hear thy tragic song.
Go, not unmindful of that cordial youth
Whom, long endeared, thou leav'st by Lavant's side;
Together let us wish him lasting truth,
And joy untainted, with his destined bride.
Go! nor regardless, while these numbers boast

My short-lived bliss, forget my social name,
But think, far off, how, on the southern coast,
I met thy friendship with an equal flame.
Fresh to that soil thou turn'st whose ev'ry vale
Shall prompt the poet, and his song demand:
To thee thy copious subjects ne'er shall fail;
Thou need'st but take the pencil to thy hand,
And paint what all believe who own thy genial land.

II

There must thou wake perforce thy Doric quill:
'T is Fancy's land to which thou sett'st thy feet,
Where still, 't is said, the fairy people meet
Beneath each birken shade on mead or hill.
There each trim lass that skims the milky store
To the swart tribes their creamy bowl allots;
By night they sip it round the cottage door,
While airy minstrels warble jocund notes.
There ev'ry herd, by sad experience, knows
How, winged with fate, their elf-shot arrows fly,
When the sick ewe her summer food foregoes,
Or, stretched on earth, the heart-smit heifers lie.
Such airy beings awe th' untutored swain,
Nor thou, though learn'd, his homelier thoughts neglect;
Let thy sweet Muse the rural faith sustain:
These are the themes of simple, sure effect,
That add new conquests to her boundless reign,
And fill, with double force, her heart-commanding strain.

III

Ev'n yet preserved, how often may'st thou hear,
Where to the pole the boreal mountains run,
Taught by the father to his list'ning son,
Strange lays, whose pow'r had charmed a Spenser's ear.
At ev'ry pause, before thy mind possest,
Old runic bards shall seem to rise around,
With uncouth lyres, in many-coloured vest,
Their matted hair with boughs fantastic crowned:
Whether thou bid'st the well-taught hind repeat
The choral dirge that mourns some chieftain brave,

When ev'ry shrieking maid her bosom beat,
And strewed with choicest herbs his scented grave;
Or whether, sitting in the shepherd's shiel,
Thou hear'st some sounding tale of war's alarms,
When, at the bugle's call, with fire and steel,
The sturdy clans poured forth their bony swarms,
And hostile brothers met to prove each other's arms.

IV

'T is thine to sing, how, framing hideous spells,
In Sky's lone isle, the gifted wizard seer,
Lodged in the wintry cave with [ ]
Or in the depth of Uist's dark forests, dwells;
How they whose sight such dreary dreams engross,
With their own visions oft astonished droop,
When o'er the wat'ry strath or quaggy moss
They see the gliding ghosts unbodied troop,
Or if in sports, or on the festive green,
Their [ ] glance some fated youth descry,
Who now, perhaps, in lusty vigour seen
And rosy health, shall soon lamented die:
For them the viewless forms of air obey,
Their bidding heed, and at their beck repair;
They know what spirit brews the stormful day,
And, heartless, oft like moody madness stare
To see the phantom train their secret work prepare.

V

[This stanza, comprising ll. 70–86, was missing in the MS.]

VI

[The first eight lines of this stanza, ll. 87–94 of the ode, were missing in the MS.]

What though, far off, from some dark dell espied,
His glimm'ring mazes cheer th' excursive sight,
Yet turn, ye wand'rers, turn your steps aside,
Nor trust the guidance of that faithless light;
For, watchful, lurking 'mid th' unrustling reed,
At those mirk hours the wily monster lies,

And listens oft to hear the passing steed,
And frequent round him rolls his sullen eyes,
If chance his savage wrath may some weak wretch surprise.

VII

Ah, luckless swain, o'er all unblest indeed!
Whom, late bewildered in the dank, dark fen,
Far from his flocks and smoking hamlet then,
To that sad spot [ ]
On him, enraged, the fiend, in angry mood,
Shall never look with Pity's kind concern,
But instant, furious, raise the whelming flood
O'er its drowned bank, forbidding all return:
Or if he meditate his wished escape
To some dim hill that seems uprising near,
To his faint eye the grim and grisly shape,
In all its terrors clad, shall wild appear;
Meantime the wat'ry surge shall round him rise,
Poured sudden forth from ev'ry swelling source.
What now remains but tears and hopeless sighs?
His fear-shook limbs have lost their youthly force,
And down the waves he floats, a pale and breathless corse.

VIII

For him, in vain, his anxious wife shall wait,
Or wander forth to meet him on his way;
For him, in vain, at to-fall of the day,
His babes shall linger at th' unclosing gate.
Ah, ne'er shall he return! Alone, if night
Her travelled limbs in broken slumbers steep,
With dropping willows drest his mournful sprite
Shall visit sad, perchance, her silent sleep;
Then he, perhaps, with moist and wat'ry hand,
Shall fondly seem to press her shudd'ring cheek,
And with his blue-swoln face before her stand,
And, shiv'ring cold, these piteous accents speak:
"Pursue, dear wife, thy daily toils pursue
At dawn or dusk, industrious as before;
Nor e'er of me one hapless thought renew,
While I lie welt'ring on the oziered shore,
Drowned by the kelpie's wrath, nor e'er shall aid thee more!"

IX

Unbounded is thy range. With varied style
Thy Muse may, like those feath'ry tribes which spring
From their rude rocks, extend her skirting wing
Round the moist marge of each cold Hebrid isle,
To that hoar pile which still its ruin shows;
In whose small vaults a pigmy-folk is found,
Whose bones the delver with his spade upthrows,
And culls them, wond'ring, from the hallowed ground:
Or thither, where, beneath the show'ry west,
The mighty kings of three fair realms are laid;
Once foes, perhaps, together now they rest;
No slaves revere them, and no wars invade;
Yet frequent now, at midnight's solemn hour,
The rifted mounds their yawning cells unfold,
And forth the monarchs stalk with sov'reign pow'r,
In pageant robes and wreathed with sheeny gold,
And on their twilight tombs aërial council hold.

X

But O, o'er all, forget not Kilda's race,
On whose bleak rocks, which brave the wasting tides,
Fair Nature's daughter, Virtue, yet abides.
Go, just as they, their blameless manners trace!
Then to my ear transmit some gentle song
Of those whose lives are yet sincere and plain,
Their bounded walks the rugged cliffs along,
And all their prospect but the wintry main.
With sparing temp'rance, at the needful time,
They drain the sainted spring; or, hunger-prest,
Along th' Atlantic rock undreading climb,
And of its eggs despoil the solan's nest.
Thus blest in primal innocence they live,
Sufficed and happy with that frugal fare
Which tasteful toil and hourly danger give.
Hard is their shallow soil, and bleak and bare;
Nor ever vernal bee was heard to murmur there!

XI

Nor need'st thou blush that such false themes engage
Thy gentle mind, of fairer stores possest;

For not alone they touch the village breast,
But filled in elder time th' historic page.
There Shakespear's self, with ev'ry garland crowned,
[ ]
In musing hour, his wayward Sisters found,
And with their terrors drest the magic scene;
From them he sung, when, 'mid his bold design,
Before the Scot afflicted and aghast,
The shadowy kings of Banquo's fated line
Through the dark cave in gleamy pageant passed.
Proceed, nor quit the tales which, simply told,
Could once so well my answ'ring bosom pierce.
Proceed! in forceful sounds and colours bold,
The native legends of thy land rehearse;
To such adapt thy lyre and suit thy pow'rful verse.

XII

In scenes like these, which, daring to depart
From sober truth, are still to nature true,
And call forth fresh delight to Fancy's view,
Th' heroic Muse employed her Tasso's art:
How have I trembled, when, at Tancred's stroke,
Its gushing blood the gaping cypress poured;
When each live plant with mortal accents spoke,
And the wild blast upheaved the vanished sword!
How have I sat, when piped the pensive wind,
To hear his harp, by British Fairfax strung;—
Prevailing poet, whose undoubting mind
Believed the magic wonders which he sung!
Hence at each sound imagination glows;
[ ]
Hence his warm lay with softest sweetness flows;
Melting it flows, pure, num'rous, strong, and clear,
And fills th' impassioned heart, and wins th' harmonious ear.

XIII

All hail, ye scenes that o'er my soul prevail,
Ye [ ] friths and lakes which, far away,
Are by smooth Annan filled or past'ral Tay
Or Don's romantic springs; at distance, hail!

The time shall come when I, perhaps, may tread
  Your lowly glens, o'erhung with spreading broom,
Or o'er your stretching heaths by fancy led:
  [your mossy ... arms]
Then will I dress once more the faded bow'r,
  Where Jonson sat in Drummond's [lonely] shade,
Or crop from Tiviot's dale each [rural] ...
  And mourn on Yarrow's banks [mute] ...
Meantime, ye Pow'rs that on the plains which bore
  The cordial youth, on Lothian's plains, attend,
Where'er he dwell, on hill or lowly muir,
  To him I lose your kind protection lend,
And, touched with love like mine, preserve my absent friend!

1749. 1788.

THOMAS GRAY

ODE ON THE SPRING

Lo, where the rosy-bosomed Hours,
  Fair Venus' train, appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
  And wake the purple year.
The Attic warbler pours her throat,
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
  The untaught harmony of spring;
While, whisp'ring pleasure as they fly,
Cool zephyrs through the clear blue sky
  Their gathered fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
  A broader, browner shade,
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
  O'er-canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
  (At ease reclined in rustic state)
How vain the ardour of the crowd,
How low, how little are the proud,
  How indigent the great!

Still is the toiling hand of Care;
The panting herds repose;
Yet hark how through the peopled air
The busy murmur glows!
The insect youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honied spring
And float amid the liquid noon;
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gaily-gilded trim
Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye
Such is the race of man;
And they that creep, and they that fly,
Shall end where they began:
Alike the busy and the gay
But flutter through life's little day,
In Fortune's varying colours drest;
Brushed by the hand of rough Mischance,
Or chilled by age, their airy dance
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear in accents low
The sportive kind reply:
"Poor moralist, and what art thou?
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display;
On hasty wings thy youth is flown,
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—
We frolic while 't is May.

1742. 1748.

ODE ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE

Ye distant spires, ye antique towers,
That crown the wat'ry glade,
Where grateful Science still adores
Her Henry's holy shade;

And ye that from the stately brow
Of Windsor's heights th' expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver-winding way:

Ah, happy hills! ah, pleasing shade!
Ah, fields beloved in vain!
Where once my careless childhood strayed,
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales that from ye blow
A momentary bliss bestow,
As, waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.

Say, father Thames—for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race,
Disporting on thy margent green,
The paths of pleasure trace,—
Who foremost now delight to cleave
With pliant arm thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthral?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball?

While some, on earnest business bent,
Their murm'ring labours ply
'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint
To sweeten liberty,
Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign,
And unknown regions dare descry;
Still as they run they look behind,
They hear a voice in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs, by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possessed;
The tear forgot as soon as shed;
The sunshine of the breast;
Theirs buxom health of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever-new,
And lively cheer of vigour born;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
That fly th' approach of morn.

Alas, regardless of their doom
The little victims play!
No sense have they of ills to come,
Nor care beyond to-day:
Yet see how all around 'em wait
The ministers of human Fate,
And black Misfortune's baleful train!
Ah, show them where in ambush stand,
To seize their prey, the murth'rous band!
Ah, tell them they are men!

These shall the fury Passions tear,
The vultures of the mind:
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame that sculks behind;
Or pining Love shall waste their youth,
Or Jealousy with rankling tooth,
That inly gnaws the secret heart,
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-visaged, comfortless Despair,
And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,
And grinning Infamy.
The stings of Falsehood those shall try,
And hard Unkindness' altered eye,
That mocks the tear it forced to flow,

And keen Remorse with blood defiled,
And moody Madness laughing wild
Amid severest woe.

Lo, in the vale of years beneath,
A griesly troop are seen,
The painful family of Death,
More hideous than their queen:
This racks the joints; this fires the veins;
That every labouring sinew strains;
Those in the deeper vitals rage;
Lo, Poverty, to fill the band,
That numbs the soul with icy hand,
And slow-consuming Age.

To each his suff'rings; all are men,
Condemned alike to groan—
The tender for another's pain,
Th' unfeeling for his own.
Yet, ah, why should they know their fate?
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly flies,
Thought would destroy their paradise.
No more; where ignorance is bliss,
'T is folly to be wise.

1742. 1747.

HYMN TO ADVERSITY

Daughter of Jove, relentless power,
Thou tamer of the human breast,
Whose iron scourge and tort'ring hour
The bad affright, afflict the best!
Bound in thy adamantine chain,
The proud are taught to taste of pain,
And purple tyrants vainly groan
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.

When first thy sire to send on earth
Virtue, his darling child, designed,
To thee he gave the heav'nly birth,
And bade to form her infant mind.

Stern, rugged nurse! thy rigid lore
With patience many a year she bore;
What sorrow was thou bad'st her know,
And from her own she learned to melt at others' woe.

Scared at thy frown terrific, fly
Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,
Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,
And leave us leisure to be good:
Light they disperse, and with them go
The summer friend, the flatt'ring foe;
By vain Prosperity received,
To her they vow their truth and are again believed.

Wisdom in sable garb arrayed,
Immersed in rapt'rous thought profound,
And Melancholy, silent maid,
With leaden eye that loves the ground,
Still on thy solemn steps attend;
Warm Charity, the gen'ral friend,
With Justice, to herself severe,
And Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

Oh, gently on thy suppliant's head,
Dread goddess, lay thy chast'ning hand!
Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,
Nor circled with the vengeful band
(As by the impious thou art seen),
With thund'ring voice and threat'ning mien,
With screaming Horror's funeral cry,
Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty:

Thy form benign, O goddess, wear,
Thy milder influence impart;
Thy philosophic train be there,
To soften, not to wound, my heart;
The gen'rous spark extinct revive,
Teach me to love and to forgive,
Exact my own defects to scan,
What others are to feel, and know myself a man.

1742. 1748.

SONNET

ON THE DEATH OF RICHARD WEST

In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And redd'ning Phœbus lifts his golden fire;
The birds in vain their amorous descant join,
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire:
These ears, alas! for other notes repine;
A different object do these eyes require;
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine,
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;
To warm their little loves the birds complain:
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
And weep the more because I weep in vain.

1742. 1775.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT

DROWNED IN A TUB OF GOLDFISHES

'T was on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers that blow;
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima, reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared;
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat, that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
She saw, and purred applause.

Still had she gazed: but 'midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The genii of the stream;
Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue
Through richest purple to the view
Betrayed a golden gleam.

The hapless nymph with wonder saw;
A whisker first, and then a claw,
With many an ardent wish,
She stretched, in vain, to reach the prize:
What female heart can gold despise,
What cat's averse to fish?

Presumptuous maid! with looks intent
Again she stretched, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between:
(Malignant Fate sat by, and smiled)
The slipp'ry verge her feet beguiled,
She tumbled headlong in.

Eight times emerging from the flood,
She mewed to ev'ry wat'ry god,
Some speedy aid to send.
No dolphin came, no Nereid stirred,
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard:
A fav'rite has no friend!

From hence, ye beauties, undeceived,
Know one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold.
Not all that tempts your wand'ring eyes
And heedless hearts is lawful prize,
Nor all that glisters gold.

1747. 1748

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day;
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea;
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wand'ring near her secret bow'r,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If Mem'ry o'er their tomb no trophies raise
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton, here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their hist'ry in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbad: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbad to wade through slaughter to a throne
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unlettered Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die:

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, ling'ring look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee who, mindful of th' unhonoured dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate,
If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him, at the peep of dawn,
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

"There, at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies, he would rove;
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn
Or crazed with care or crossed in hopeless love.

"One morn I missed him on the customed hill,
Along the heath, and near his fav'rite tree;
Another came, nor yet beside the rill
Nor up the lawn nor at the wood was he;

"The next, with dirges due, in sad array,
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne:
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown:
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heav'n did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Mis'ry all he had, a tear;
He gained from Heav'n ('t was all he wished) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode
(There they alike in trembling hope repose),
The bosom of his Father and his God.

1742?–50. 1751.

THE PROGRESS OF POESY

I. 1

Awake, Æolian lyre, awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings!
From Helicon's harmonious springs
A thousand rills their mazy progress take;
The laughing flowers that round them blow
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
Through verdant vales and Ceres' golden reign:
Now rolling down the steep amain,
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour;
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

I. 2

Oh sovereign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell! the sullen Cares
And frantic Passions hear thy soft control.
On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curbed the fury of his car
And dropped his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching on the sceptred hand

Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feathered king
With ruffled plumes and flagging wing;
Quenched in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak and lightnings of his eye.

I. 3

Thee the voice, the dance, obey,
Tempered to thy warbled lay.
O'er Idalia's velvet-green
The rosy-crownèd Loves are seen,
On Cytherea's day,
With antic Sports and blue-eyed Pleasures
Frisking light in frolic measures:
Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling troops they meet;
To brisk notes in cadence beating
Glance their many-twinkling feet.
Slow melting strains their Queen's approach declare:
Where'er she turns the Graces homage pay;
With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
In gliding state she wins her easy way;
O'er her warm cheek and rising bosom move
The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.

II. 1

Man's feeble race what ills await:
Labour, and Penury, the racks of Pain,
Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
And Death, sad refuge from the storms of Fate!
The fond complaint, my song, disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.
Say, has he giv'n in vain the heav'nly Muse?
Night, and all her sickly dews,
Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry,
He gives to range the dreary sky;
Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glitt'ring shafts of war.

II. 2

In climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
The Muse has broke the twilight-gloom

To cheer the shiv'ring native's dull abode.
And oft, beneath the od'rous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat,
In loose numbers wildly sweet,
Their feather-cinctured chiefs and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the goddess roves,
Glory pursue, and generous Shame,
Th' unconquerable Mind, and Freedom's holy flame.

II. 3

Woods that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles that crown th' Ægean deep,
Fields that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Mæander's amber waves
In lingering lab'rinths creep,
How do your tuneful echoes languish,
Mute but to the voice of Anguish?
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around,
Ev'ry shade and hallowed fountain
Murmured deep a solemn sound;
Till the sad Nine in Greece's evil hour
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains:
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power,
And coward Vice that revels in her chains.
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, O Albion, next, thy sea-encircled coast!

III. 1

Far from the sun and summer-gale,
In thy green lap was Nature's darling laid,
What time, where lucid Avon strayed,
To him the mighty Mother did unveil
Her awful face: the dauntless child
Stretched forth his little arms, and smiled.
"This pencil take," she said, "whose colours clear
Richly paint the vernal year.
Thine too these golden keys, immortal boy:
This can unlock the gates of Joy;
Of Horrour that, and thrilling Fears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears."

III. 2

Nor second he that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy,
The secrets of th' Abyss to spy.
He passed the flaming bounds of Place and Time:
The living throne, the sapphire blaze,
Where angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw; but, blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold where Dryden's less presumptuous car
Wide o'er the fields of Glory bear
Two coursers of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding pace!

III. 3

Hark! his hands the lyre explore:
Bright-eyed Fancy hovering o'er,
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe and words that burn.
But, ah, 't is heard no more!
O lyre divine, what daring spirit
Wakes thee now? Though he inherit
Nor the pride nor ample pinion
That the Theban Eagle bear,
Sailing with supreme dominion
Through the azure deep of air,
Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray,
With orient hues unborrowed of the sun:
Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,
Beneath the good how far—but far above the great.

1754. 1757.

THE BARD

I. 1

"Ruin seize thee, ruthless king!
Confusion on thy banners wait;
Though fanned by Conquest's crimson wing,
They mock the air with idle state.

Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail,
Nor even thy virtues, tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears!"
Such were the sounds that o'er the crested pride
Of the first Edward scattered wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array.
Stout Glo'ster stood aghast in speechless trance;
"To arms!" cried Mortimer, and couched his quiv'ring lance.

I. 2

On a rock whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the poet stood
(Loose his beard and hoary hair
Streamed, like a meteor, to the troubled air),
And with a master's hand and prophet's fire
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre:
"Hark how each giant oak and desert cave
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!
O'er thee, oh king! their hundred arms they wave,
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe,
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp or soft Llewellyn's lay.

I. 3

"Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hushed the stormy main;
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed;
Mountains, ye mourn in vain
Modred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topped head:
On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,
Smeared with gore and ghastly pale;
Far, far aloof th' affrighted ravens sail;
The famished eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,

Ye died amidst your dying country's cries—
No more I weep: they do not sleep!
On yonder cliffs, a griesly band,
I see them sit; they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land:
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.

II. 1

"Weave the warp and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of Edward's race;
Give ample room and verge enough
The characters of hell to trace:
Mark the year, and mark the night,
When Severn shall re-echo with affright
The shrieks of death through Berkley's roofs that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing king!
She-wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs,
That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate,
From thee be born who o'er thy country hangs,
The scourge of Heav'n: what terrors round him wait!
Amazement in his van, with Flight combined,
And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind.

II. 2

"Mighty victor, mighty lord!
Low on his funeral couch he lies:
No pitying heart, no eye, afford
A tear to grace his obsequies.
Is the Sable Warriour fled?
Thy son is gone; he rests among the dead.
The swarm that in thy noontide beam were born?
Gone to salute the rising morn.
Fair laughs the morn and soft the zephyr blows,
While, proudly riding o'er the azure realm,
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm,
Regardless of the sweeping Whirlwind's sway,
That, hushed in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

II. 3

"Fill high the sparkling bowl,
The rich repast prepare;
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast:
Close by the regal chair
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.
Heard ye the din of battle bray,
Lance to lance, and horse to horse?
Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
And through the kindred squadrons mow their way.
Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murther fed,
Revere his consort's faith, his father's fame,
And spare the meek usurper's holy head!
Above, below, the rose of snow,
Twined with her blushing foe, we spread:
The bristled Boar in infant gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
Now, brothers, bending o'er th' accursed loom,
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom!

III. 1

"Edward, lo! to sudden fate
(Weave we the woof: the thread is spun)
Half of thy heart we consecrate.
(The web is wove. The work is done.)
Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unblest, unpitied, here to mourn!
In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height,
Descending slow, their glitt'ring skirts unroll?
Visions of glory, spare my aching sight!
Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!
No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail:
All hail, ye genuine kings, Britannia's issue, hail!

III. 2

"Girt with many a baron bold,
Sublime their starry fronts they rear;
And gorgeous dames, and statesmen old

In bearded majesty, appear.
In the midst a form divine!
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton line;
Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face,
Attempered sweet to virgin-grace.
What strings symphonious tremble in the air,
What strains of vocal transport round her play!
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear:
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
Bright Rapture calls, and, soaring as she sings,
Waves in the eye of Heav'n her many-coloured wings.

III. 3

"The verse adorn again
Fierce War and faithful Love
And Truth severe, by fairy Fiction drest.
In buskined measures move
Pale Grief and Pleasing Pain,
With Horrour, tyrant of the throbbing breast.
A voice, as of the cherub-choir,
Gales from blooming Eden bear;
And distant warblings lessen on my ear,
That, lost in long futurity, expire.
Fond impious man, think'st thou yon sanguine cloud,
Raised by thy breath, has quenched the orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
Enough for me; with joy I see
The different doom our Fates assign:
Be thine Despair and sceptred Care;
To triumph and to die are mine."
He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night.

1754–57. 1757.

ODE ON THE PLEASURE ARISING FROM VICISSITUDE

Now the golden Morn aloft
Waves her dew-bespangled wing;
With vermeil cheek and whisper soft
She wooes the tardy Spring;

Till April starts, and calls around
The sleeping fragrance from the ground,
And lightly o'er the living scene
Scatters his freshest, tenderest green.

New-born flocks, in rustic dance,
Frisking ply their feeble feet;
Forgetful of their wintry trance,
The birds his presence greet;
But chief the sky-lark warbles high
His trembling, thrilling ecstasy,
And, lessening from the dazzled sight,
Melts into air and liquid light.

Rise, my soul! on wings of fire
Rise the rapturous choir among!
Hark! 't is Nature strikes the lyre,
And leads the general song.

Yesterday the sullen year
Saw the snowy whirlwind fly;
Mute was the music of the air,
The herd stood drooping by:
Their raptures now that wildly flow
No yesterday nor morrow know;
'T is man alone that joy descries
With forward and reverted eyes.

Smiles on past Misfortune's brow
Soft Reflection's hand can trace,
And o'er the cheek of Sorrow throw
A melancholy grace;
While Hope prolongs our happier hour,
Or deepest shades, that dimly lower
And blacken round our weary way,
Gilds with a gleam of distant day.

Still where rosy Pleasure leads
See a kindred Grief pursue;
Behind the steps that Misery treads,
Approaching Comfort view:

The hues of bliss more brightly glow
Chastised by sabler tints of woe,
And, blended, form with artful strife
The strength and harmony of life.

See the wretch that long has tossed
On the thorny bed of pain
At length repair his vigour lost
And breathe and walk again:
The meanest flowret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To him are opening Paradise.

1754? 1775.

THE FATAL SISTERS

Now the storm begins to lower
(Haste, the loom of hell prepare!);
Iron sleet of arrowy shower
Hurtles in the darkened air.

Glitt'ring lances are the loom,
Where the dusky warp we strain,
Weaving many a soldier's doom,
Orkney's woe and Randver's bane.

See the grisly texture grow!
'T is of human entrails made;
And the weights, that play below,
Each a gasping warrior's head.

Shafts for shuttles, dipt in gore,
Shoot the trembling cords along.
Sword, that once a monarch bore,
Keep the tissue close and strong.

Mista black, terrific maid,
Sangrida, and Hilda, see,
Join the wayward work to aid:
'T is the woof of victory.

Ere the ruddy sun be set,
Pikes must shiver, javelins sing,
Blade with clattering buckler meet,
Hauberk crash, and helmet ring.

(Weave the crimson web of war!)
Let us go, and let us fly
Where our friends the conflict share,
Where they triumph, where they die.

As the paths of Fate we tread,
Wading through th' ensanguined field,
Gondula and Geira, spread
O'er the youthful king your shield.

We the reins to slaughter give;
Ours to kill, and ours to spare:
Spite of danger he shall live.
(Weave the crimson web of war!)

They whom once the desert beach
Pent within its bleak domain,
Soon their ample sway shall stretch
O'er the plenty of the plain.

Low the dauntless earl is laid,
Gored with many a gaping wound:
Fate demands a nobler head;
Soon a king shall bite the ground.

Long his loss shall Eirin weep,
Ne'er again his likeness see;
Long her strains in sorrow steep,
Strains of immortality!

Horror covers all the heath,
Clouds of carnage blot the sun.
Sisters, weave the web of death!
Sisters, cease; the work is done.

Hail the task, and hail the hands!
Songs of joy and triumph sing:
Joy to the victorious bands,
Triumph to the younger king.

Mortal, thou that hear'st the tale,
Learn the tenor of our song.
Scotland, through each winding vale
Far and wide the notes prolong.

Sisters, hence with spurs of speed;
Each her thundering falchion wield;
Each bestride her sable steed.
Hurry, hurry to the field!

1761. 1768.

THE DESCENT OF ODIN

Uprose the King of Men with speed,
And saddled straight his coal-black steed;
Down the yawning steep he rode,
That leads to Hela's drear abode.
Him the Dog of Darkness spied:
His shaggy throat he opened wide,
While from his jaws, with carnage filled,
Foam and human gore distilled;
Hoarse he bays with hideous din,
Eyes that glow and fangs that grin,
And long pursues with fruitless yell
The Father of the powerful spell.
Onward still his way he takes
(The groaning earth beneath him shakes),
Till full before his fearless eyes
The portals nine of hell arise.
Right against the eastern gate,
By the moss-grown pile he sate,
Where long of yore to sleep was laid
The dust of the prophetic maid.
Facing to the northern clime,
Thrice he traced the runic rhyme,
Thrice pronounced in accents dread
The thrilling verse that wakes the dead;
Till from out the hollow ground
Slowly breathed a sullen sound.

Prophetess. What call unknown, what charms, presume
To break the quiet of the tomb?
Who thus afflicts my troubled sprite,
And drags me from the realms of night?
Long on these mould'ring bones have beat
The winter's snow, the summer's heat,
The drenching dews, and driving rain:
Let me, let me sleep again!
Who is he, with voice unblest,
That calls me from the bed of rest?
Odin. A traveller, to thee unknown,
Is he that calls, a warrior's son.
Thou the deeds of light shalt know:
Tell me what is done below;
For whom yon glitt'ring board is spread,
Drest for whom yon golden bed?
Prophetess. Mantling in the goblet see
The pure bev'rage of the bee;
O'er it hangs the shield of gold;
'T is the drink of Balder bold:
Balder's head to death is giv'n;
Pain can reach the sons of Heav'n!
Unwilling I my lips unclose:
Leave me, leave me to repose!
Odin. Once again my call obey:
Prophetess, arise, and say
What dangers Odin's child await,
Who the author of his fate?
Prophetess. In Hoder's hand the hero's doom;
His brother sends him to the tomb.
Now my weary lips I close:
Leave me, leave me to repose!
Odin. Prophetess, my spell obey:
Once again arise, and say
Who th' avenger of his guilt,
By whom shall Hoder's blood be spilt?
Prophetess. In the caverns of the west,
By Odin's fierce embrace comprest,
A wondrous boy shall Rinda bear;
Who ne'er shall comb his raven hair,

Nor wash his visage in the stream,
Nor see the sun's departing beam,
Till he on Hoder's corse shall smile
Flaming on the fun'ral pile.
Now my weary lips I close:
Leave me, leave me to repose!
Odin. Yet awhile my call obey:
Prophetess, awake, and say
What virgins these, in speechless woe,
That bend to earth their solemn brow,
That their flaxen tresses tear,
And snowy veils that float in air.
Tell me whence their sorrows rose;
Then I leave thee to repose.
Prophetess. Ha! no traveller art thou!
King of Men, I know thee now;
Mightiest of a mighty line—
Odin. No boding maid of skill divine
Art thou, nor prophetess of good,
But mother of the giant brood!
Prophetess. Hie thee hence, and boast at home
That never shall enquirer come
To break my iron sleep again,
Till Lok has burst his tenfold chain;
Never, till substantial Night
Has reassumed her ancient right;
Till wrapt in flames, in ruin hurled,
Sinks the fabric of the world.

1761. 1768.

SKETCH OF HIS OWN CHARACTER

Too poor for a bribe, and too proud to importune,
He had not the method of making a fortune;
Could love and could hate, so was thought somewhat odd;
No very great wit, he believed in a God;
A place or a pension he did not desire,
But left church and state to Charles Townshend and Squire.

1761. 1775.

MARK AKENSIDE

FROM

THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION

Say, why was man so eminently raised
Amid the vast creation, why ordained
Through life and death to dart his piercing eye,
With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame,
But that th' Omnipotent might send him forth,
In sight of mortal and immortal pow'rs,
As on a boundless theatre, to run
The great career of justice; to exalt
His gen'rous aim to all diviner deeds;
To chase each partial purpose from his breast;
And through the mists of passion and of sense,
And through the tossing tide of chance and pain,
To hold his course unfalt'ring, while the voice
Of Truth and Virtue, up the steep ascent
Of Nature, calls him to his high reward—
Th' applauding smile of Heav'n? Else wherefore burns
In mortal bosoms this unquenchèd hope,
That breathes from day to day sublimer things,
And mocks possession? wherefore darts the mind
With such resistless ardour to embrace
Majestic forms, impatient to be free,
Spurning the gross control of wilful might,
Proud of the strong contention of her toils,
Proud to be daring? Who but rather turns
To heav'n's broad fire his unconstrainèd view
Than to the glimm'ring of a waxen flame?
Who that, from Alpine heights, his lab'ring eye
Shoots round the wide horizon, to survey
Nilus or Ganges rolling his bright wave
Through mountains, plains, through empires black with shade,
And continents of sand, will turn his gaze
To mark the windings of a scanty rill
That murmurs at his feet? The high-born soul
Disdains to rest her heav'n-aspiring wing
Beneath its native quarry. Tired of earth

And this diurnal scene, she springs aloft
Through fields of air, pursues the flying storm,
Rides on the vollied lightning through the heav'ns,
Or, yoked with whirlwinds and the northern blast,
Sweeps the long tract of day. Then high she soars
The blue profound, and, hovering round the sun,
Beholds him pouring the redundant stream
Of light, beholds his unrelenting sway
Bend the reluctant planets to absolve
The fated rounds of Time. Thence, far effused,
She darts her swiftness up the long career
Of devious comets; through its burning signs,
Exulting, circles the perennial wheel
Of Nature, and looks back on all the stars,
Whose blended light, as with a milky zone,
Invests the orient. Now amazed she views
Th' empyreal waste, where happy spirits hold,
Beyond this concave heav'n, their calm abode;
And fields of radiance, whose unfading light
Has travelled the profound six thousand years,
Nor yet arrives in sight of mortal things.
Ev'n on the barriers of the world, untired,
She meditates th' eternal depth below;
Till, half recoiling, down the headlong steep
She plunges, soon o'erwhelmed and swallowed up
In that immense of being. There her hopes
Rest at the fated goal. For, from the birth
Of mortal man, the Sov'reign Maker said
That not in humble nor in brief delight,
Not in the fading echoes of renown,
Pow'r's purple robes, nor Pleasure's flow'ry lap,
The soul should find enjoyment; but from these
Turning disdainful to an equal good,
Through all th' ascent of things enlarge her view,
Till every bound at length should disappear,
And infinite perfection close the scene.

1738?–43. 1744.

FOR A GROTTO

To me, whom in their lays the shepherds call
Actaea, daughter of the neighbouring stream,

This cave belongs. The fig-tree and the vine,
Which o'er the rocky entrance downward shoot,
Were placed by Glycon. He, with cowslips pale,
Primrose, and purple lychnis, decked the green
Before my threshold, and my shelving walls
With honeysuckle covered. Here, at noon,
Lulled by the murmur of my rising fount,
I slumber; here my clustering fruits I tend;
Or from the humid flowers, at break of day,
Fresh garlands weave, and chase from all my bounds
Each thing impure or noxious. Enter in,
O stranger, undismayed. Nor bat nor toad
Here lurks: and if thy breast of blameless thoughts
Approve thee, not unwelcome shalt thou tread
My quiet mansion; chiefly, if thy name
Wise Pallas and the immortal Muses own.

1758.

CHRISTOPHER SMART

FROM

A SONG TO DAVID

Sweet is the dew that falls betimes,
And drops upon the leafy limes;
  Sweet, Hermon's fragrant air;
Sweet is the lily's silver bell,
And sweet the wakeful tapers' smell
  That watch for early prayer;

Sweet the young nurse, with love intense,
Which smiles o'er sleeping innocence;
  Sweet when the lost arrive;
Sweet the musician's ardour beats,
While his vague mind's in quest of sweets,
  The choicest flowers to hive:

Sweeter, in all the strains of love,
The language of thy tuttle-dove,
  Paired to thy swelling chord;

Sweeter, with every grace endued,
The glory of thy gratitude
Respired unto the Lord.

Strong is the horse upon his speed;
Strong in pursuit the rapid glede,
Which makes at once his game;
Strong the tall ostrich on the ground;
Strong through the turbulent profound
Shoots Xiphias to his aim;

Strong is the lion—like a coal
His eyeball, like a bastion's mole
His chest against the foes;
Strong the gier-eagle on his sail;
Strong against tide th' enormous whale
Emerges as he goes:

But stronger still, in earth and air
And in the sea, the man of prayer,
And far beneath the tide,
And in the seat to faith assigned,
Where ask is have, where seek is find,
Where knock is open wide.

Beauteous the fleet before the gale;
Beauteous the multitudes in mail,
Ranked arms and crested heads;
Beauteous the garden's umbrage mild,
Walk, water, meditated wild,
And all the bloomy beds;

Beauteous the moon full on the lawn;
And beauteous when the veil 's withdrawn
The virgin to her spouse;
Beauteous the temple, decked and filled,
When to the heaven of heavens they build
Their heart-directed vows:

Beauteous, yea beauteous more than these,
The Shepherd King upon his knees,
For his momentous trust;
With wish of infinite conceit

For man, beast, mute, the small and great,
And prostrate dust to dust.

Precious the bounteous widow's mite;
And precious, for extreme delight,
The largess from the churl;
Precious the ruby's blushing blaze,
And alba's blest imperial rays,
And pure cerulean pearl;

Precious the penitential tear;
And precious is the sigh sincere,
Acceptable to God;
And precious are the winning flowers,
In gladsome Israel's feast of bowers,
Bound on the hallowed sod:

More precious that diviner part
Of David, even the Lord's own heart,
Great, beautiful, and new;
In all things where it was intent,
In all extremes, in each event,
Proof—answering true to true.

Glorious the sun in mid career;
Glorious th' assembled fires appear;
Glorious the comet's train;
Glorious the trumpet and alarm;
Glorious th' Almighty's stretched-out arm;
Glorious th' enraptured main;

Glorious the northern lights a-stream;
Glorious the song, when God's the theme;
Glorious the thunder's roar;
Glorious, Hosannah from the den;
Glorious the catholic amen;
Glorious the martyr's gore:

Glorious, more glorious, is the crown
Of Him That brought salvation down,
By meekness called thy son;
Thou that stupendous truth believed,
And now the matchless deed's achieved,
Determined, dared, and done.

1763? 1763.

THOMAS WARTON

FROM

THE PLEASURES OF MELANCHOLY

Beneath yon ruined abbey's moss-grown piles
Oft let me sit, at twilight hour of eve,
Where through some western window the pale moon
Pours her long-levelled rule of streaming light,
While sullen, sacred silence reigns around,
Save the lone screech-owl's note, who builds his bow'r
Amid the mould'ring caverns dark and damp,
Or the calm breeze that rustles in the leaves
Of flaunting ivy, that with mantle green
Invests some wasted tow'r. Or let me tread
Its neighb'ring walk of pines, where mused of old
The cloistered brothers: through the gloomy void
That far extends beneath their ample arch
As on I pace, religious horror wraps
My soul in dread repose. But when the world
Is clad in midnight's raven-coloured robe,
'Mid hollow charnel let me watch the flame
Of taper dim, shedding a livid glare
O'er the wan heaps, while airy voices talk
Along the glimm'ring walls, or ghostly shape,
At distance seen, invites with beck'ning hand
My lonesome steps through the far-winding vaults.
Nor undelightful is the solemn noon
Of night, when, haply wakeful, from my couch
I start: lo, all is motionless around!
Roars not the rushing wind; the sons of men
And every beast in mute oblivion lie;
All Nature 's hushed in silence and in sleep:
O then how fearful is it to reflect
That through the still globe's awful solitude
No being wakes but me! till stealing sleep
My drooping temples bathes in opiate dews.
Nor then let dreams, of wanton folly born,
My senses lead through flow'ry paths of joy:
But let the sacred genius of the night
Such mystic visions send as Spenser saw
When through bewild'ring Fancy's magic maze,

To the fell house of Busyrane, he led
Th' unshaken Britomart; or Milton knew,
When in abstracted thought he first conceived
All heav'n in tumult, and the seraphim
Come tow'ring, armed in adamant and gold.

. . . . . .

Through Pope's soft song though all the Graces breathe,
And happiest art adorn his Attic page,
Yet does my mind with sweeter transport glow,
As, at the root of mossy trunk reclined,
In magic Spenser's wildly-warbled song
I see deserted Una wander wide
Through wasteful solitudes and lurid heaths,
Weary, forlorn, than when the fated fair
Upon the bosom bright of silver Thames
Launches in all the lustre of brocade,
Amid the splendours of the laughing sun:
The gay description palls upon the sense,
And coldly strikes the mind with feeble bliss.

. . . . . .

The tapered choir, at the late hour of pray'r,
Oft let me tread, while to th' according voice
The many-sounding organ peals on high
The clear slow-dittied chaunt or varied hymn,
Till all my soul is bathed in ecstasies
And lapped in Paradise. Or let me sit
Far in sequestered aisles of the deep dome;
There lonesome listen to the sacred sounds,
Which, as they lengthen through the Gothic vaults,
In hollow murmurs reach my ravished ear.
Nor when the lamps, expiring, yield to night,
And solitude returns, would I forsake
The solemn mansion, but attentive mark
The due clock swinging slow with sweepy sway,
Measuring Time's flight with momentary sound.

1745. 1747.

FROM

THE FIRST OF APRIL

Mindful of disaster past,
And shrinking at the northern blast,

The sleety storm returning still,
The morning hoar, and evening chill,
Reluctant comes the timid Spring.
Scarce a bee, with airy ring,
Murmurs the blossomed boughs around
That clothe the garden's southern bound;
Scarce a sickly straggling flower
Decks the rough castle's rifted tower;
Scarce the hardy primrose peeps
From the dark dell's entangled steeps;
O'er the field of waving broom
Slowly shoots the golden bloom;
And but by fits the furze-clad dale
Tinctures the transitory gale;
While from the shrubbery's naked maze,
Where the vegetable blaze
Of Flora's brightest 'broidery shone,
Every chequered charm is flown,
Save that the lilac hangs to view
Its bursting gems in clusters blue.
Scant along the ridgy land
The beans their new-born ranks expand;
The fresh-turned soil with tender blades
Thinly the sprouting barley shades;
Fringing the forest's devious edge,
Half-robed appears the hawthorn hedge,
Or to the distant eye displays
Weakly green its budding sprays.
. . . . . .
Yet in these presages rude,
Midst her pensive solitude,
Fancy, with prophetic glance,
Sees the teeming months advance,
The field, the forest, green and gay,
The dappled slope, the tedded hay,
Sees the reddening orchard blow,
The harvest wave, the vintage flow,
Sees June unfold his glossy robe
Of thousand hues o'er all the globe,
Sees Ceres grasp her crown of corn,
And Plenty load her ample horn.

1777.

TO THE RIVER LODON

Ah, what a weary race my feet have run
Since first I trod thy banks with alders crowned,
And thought my way was all through fairy ground,
Beneath thy azure sky and golden sun,
Where first my Muse to lisp her notes begun!
While pensive Memory traces back the round,
Which fills the varied interval between,
Much pleasure, more of sorrow, marks the scene.
Sweet native stream, those skies and suns so pure
No more return, to cheer my evening road.
Yet still one joy remains: that not obscure
Nor useless all my vacant days have flowed,
From youth's gay dawn to manhood's prime mature,
Nor with the Muse's laurel unbestowed.

1777.

CHARLES CHURCHILL

FROM

THE ROSCIAD

His eyes, in gloomy socket taught to roll,
Proclaimed the sullen habit of his soul.
Heavy and phlegmatic he trod the stage,
Too proud for tenderness, too dull for rage.
When Hector's lovely widow shines in tears,
Or Rowe's gay rake dependent virtue jeers,
With the same cast of features he is seen
To chide the libertine and court the queen.
From the tame scene which without passion flows,
With just desert his reputation rose.
Nor less he pleased when, on some surly plan,
He was at once the actor and the man.
In Brute he shone unequalled: all agree
Garrick's not half so great a brute as he.
When Cato's laboured scenes are brought to view,
With equal praise the actor laboured too;
For still you'll find, trace passions to their root,
Small diff'rence 'twixt the Stoic and the brute.

In fancied scenes, as in life's real plan,
He could not for a moment sink the man.
In whate'er cast his character was laid,
Self still, like oil, upon the surface played.
Nature, in spite of all his skill, crept in:
Horatio, Dorax, Falstaff—still 't was Quin.

1761.

FROM

THE APOLOGY

The Muse's office was by Heaven designed
To please, improve, instruct, reform mankind;
To make dejected Virtue nobly rise
Above the tow'ring pitch of splendid Vice;
To make pale Vice, abashed, her head hang down,
And trembling crouch at Virtue's awful frown.
Now armed with wrath, she bids eternal shame,
With strictest justice, brand the villain's name;
Now in the milder garb of ridicule
She sports, and pleases while she wounds the fool.
Her shape is often varied; but her aim,
To prop the cause of virtue, still the same.
In praise of mercy let the guilty bawl,
When vice and folly for correction call;
Silence the mark of weakness justly bears,
And is partaker of the crimes it spares.
But if the Muse, too cruel in her mirth,
With harsh reflections wounds the man of worth;
If wantonly she deviates from her plan,
And quits the actor to expose the man;
Ashamed, she marks that passage with a blot,
And hates the line where candour was forgot.
But what is candour, what is humour's vein,
Though judgment join to consecrate the strain,
If curious numbers will not aid afford,
Nor choicest music play in ev'ry word?
Verses must run, to charm a modern ear,
From all harsh, rugged interruptions clear;
Soft let them breathe as zephyr's balmy breeze,
Smooth let their current flow as summer seas,

Perfect then only deemed when they dispense
A happy tuneful vacancy of sense. . . . .
Henceforth farewell, then, fev'rish thirst of fame;
Farewell the longings for a poet's name;
Perish my Muse—a wish 'bove all severe
To him who ever held the Muses dear—
If e'er her labours weaken to refine
The gen'rous roughness of a nervous line.
Others affect the stiff and swelling phrase:
Their Muse must walk in stilts, and strut in stays;
The sense they murder, and the words transpose,
Lest poetry approach too near to prose.
See tortured Reason how they pare and trim,
And, like Procrustes, stretch or lop the limb.
Waller, whose praise succeeding bards rehearse,
Parent of harmony in English verse,
Whose tuneful Muse in sweetest accents flows,
In couplets first taught straggling sense to close.
In polished numbers and majestic sound,
Where shall thy rival, Pope, be ever found?
But whilst each line with equal beauty flows,
E'en excellence, unvaried, tedious grows.
Nature, through all her works, in great degree,
Borrows a blessing from Variety.
Music itself her needful aid requires
To rouse the soul and wake our dying fires.
Still in one key, the nightingale would tease;
Still in one key, not Brent would always please.
Here let me bend, great Dryden, at thy shrine,
Thou dearest name to all the tuneful Nine.
What if some dull lines in cold order creep,
And with his theme the poet seems to sleep?
Still, when his subject rises proud to view,
With equal strength the poet rises too;
With strong invention, noblest vigour fraught,
Thought still springs up and rises out of thought;
Numbers ennobling numbers in their course
In varied sweetness flow, in varied force;
The pow'rs of genius and of judgment join,
And the whole art of poetry is thine.

1761.

FROM

THE GHOST

Pomposo, insolent and loud,
Vain idol of a scribbling crowd,
Whose very name inspires an awe,
Whose ev'ry word is sense and law,
For what his greatness hath decreed,
Like laws of Persia and of Mede,
Sacred through all the realm of wit,
Must never of repeal admit;
Who, cursing flatt'ry, is the tool
Of ev'ry fawning, flatt'ring fool;
Who wit with jealous eye surveys,
And sickens at another's praise;
Who, proudly seized of Learning's throne,
Now damns all learning but his own;
Who scorns those common wares to trade in,
Reas'ning, convincing, and persuading,
But makes each sentence current pass
With "puppy," "coxcomb," "scoundrel," "ass,"
For 't is with him a certain rule,
The folly 's proved when he calls "fool";
Who, to increase his native strength,
Draws words six syllables in length,
With which, assisted with a frown
By way of club, he knocks us down.

1762.

WILLIAM FALCONER

FROM

THE SHIPWRECK

In vain the cords and axes were prepared,
For now th' audacious seas insult the yard;
High o'er the ship they throw a horrid shade,
And o'er her burst in terrible cascade.
Uplifted on the surge, to heaven she flies,
Her shattered top half-buried in the skies;

Then, headlong plunging, thunders on the ground:
Earth groans! air trembles! and the deeps resound!
Her giant bulk the dread concussion feels,
And, quivering with the wound, in torment reels;
So reels, convulsed with agonizing throes,
The bleeding bull beneath the murd'rer's blows.
Again she plunges! hark! a second shock
Tears her strong bottom on the marble rock—
Down on the vale of death, with dismal cries,
The fated victims, shuddering, roll their eyes,
In wild despair, while yet another stroke
With deep convulsion rends the solid oak;
Till, like the mine in whose infernal cell
The lurking demons of destruction dwell,
At length, asunder torn, her frame divides,
And, crashing, spreads in ruin o'er the tides.
Oh, were it mine with tuneful Maro's art
To wake to sympathy the feeling heart,
Like him the smooth and mournful verse to dress
In all the pomp of exquisite distress,
Then, too severely taught by cruel fate
To share in all the perils I relate,
Then might I, with unrivalled strains, deplore
Th' impervious horrors of a leeward shore.
As o'er the surge the stooping main-mast hung,
Still on the rigging thirty seamen clung.
Some struggling on a broken crag were cast,
And there by oozy tangles grappled fast;
Awhile they bore th' o'erwhelming billows' rage,
Unequal combat with their fate to wage,
Till, all benumbed and feeble, they forego
Their slippery hold and sink to shades below.
Some, from the main-yard-arm impetuous thrown
On marble ridges, die without a groan.
Three with Palemon on their skill depend,
And from the wreck on oars and rafts descend:
Now on the mountain wave on high they ride,
Then downward plunge beneath th' involving tide;
Till one, who seems in agony to strive,
The whirling breakers heave on shore alive;
The rest a speedier end of anguish knew,

And pressed the stony beach—a lifeless crew!
Next, O unhappy chief! th' eternal doom
Of Heaven decreed thee to the briny tomb!
What scenes of misery torment thy view!
What painful struggles of thy dying crew!
Thy perished hopes all buried in the flood
O'erspread with corses, red with human blood!
So, pierced with anguish, hoary Priam gazed
When Troy's imperial domes in ruin blazed,
While he, severest sorrow doomed to feel,
Expired beneath the victor's murdering steel.
Thus with his helpless partners till the last,
Sad refuge! Albert hugs the floating mast.
His soul could yet sustain this mortal blow,
But droops, alas! beneath superior woe;
For now soft nature's sympathetic chain
Tugs at his yearning heart with powerful strain:
His faithful wife, forever doomed to mourn
For him, alas! who never shall return;
To black adversity's approach exposed,
With want and hardships unforeseen enclosed;
His lovely daughter, left without a friend
Her innocence to succour and defend,
By youth and indigence set forth a prey
To lawless guilt, that flatters to betray.
While these reflections rack his feeling mind,
Rodmond, who hung beside, his grasp resigned;
And, as the tumbling waters o'er him rolled,
His outstretched arms the master's legs enfold:
Sad Albert feels the dissolution near,
And strives in vain his fettered limbs to clear,
For death bids every clinching joint adhere;
All faint, to Heaven he throws his dying eyes,
And "Oh protect my wife and child!" he cries—
The gushing streams roll back th' unfinished sound;
He gasps, he dies, and tumbles to the ground.
Five only left of all the perished throng
Yet ride the pine that shoreward drives along;
With these Arion still his hold secures,
And all th' assaults of hostile waves endures.
O'er the dire prospect as for life he strives,

He looks if poor Palemon yet survives.
"Ah wherefore, trusting to unequal art,
Didst thou, incautious, from the wreck depart?
Alas! these rocks all human skill defy—
Who strikes them once, beyond relief must die;
And now, sore wounded, thou perhaps art tost
On these or in some oozy cavern lost!"
Thus thought Arion, anxious gazing round
In vain; his eyes no more Palemon found.
The demons of destruction hover nigh,
And thick their mortal shafts commissioned fly;
And now a breaking surge, with forceful sway,
Two, next Arion, furious tears away:
Hurled on the crags, behold they gasp, they bleed,
And, groaning, cling upon th' elusive weed!
Another billow bursts in boundless roar;
Arion sinks! and memory views no more:
Ha! total night and horror here preside;
My stunned ear tingles to the whizzing tide;
It is the funeral knell! and gliding near
Methinks the phantoms of the dead appear!
But lo! emerging from the watery grave,
Again they float incumbent on the wave;
Again the dismal prospect opens round—
The wreck, the shore, the dying, and the drowned!
And see! enfeebled by repeated shocks,
Those two, who scramble on th' adjacent rocks,
Their faithless hold no longer can retain;
They sink o'erwhelmed, and never rise again.
Two with Arion yet the mast upbore,
That now above the ridges reached the shore.
Still trembling to descend, they downward gaze,
With horror pale, and torpid with amaze:
The floods recoil! the ground appears below!
And life's faint embers now rekindling glow.
Awhile they wait th' exhausted waves' retreat,
Then climb slow up the beach with hands and feet.
O Heaven! delivered by Whose sovereign hand,
Still on the brink of hell they shuddering stand,
Receive the languid incense they bestow,
That, damp with death, appears not yet to glow!

To Thee each soul the warm oblation pays
With trembling ardour of unequal praise.
In every heart dismay with wonder strives,
And Hope the sickened spark of life revives;
Her magic powers their exiled health restore,
Till horror and despair are felt no more.

A troop of Grecians who inhabit nigh,
And oft these perils of the deep descry,
Roused by the blustering tempest of the night,
Anxious had climbed Colonna's neighbouring height,
When, gazing downward on th' adjacent flood,
Full to their view the scene of ruin stood—
The surf with mangled bodies strewed around,
And those yet breathing on the sea-washed ground.
Though lost to science and the nobler arts,
Yet nature's lore informed their feeling hearts;
Straight down the vale with hastening steps they hied,
Th' unhappy sufferers to assist, and guide.

1762.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

THE TRAVELLER

OR, A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY

Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow,
Or by the lazy Scheld or wandering Po,—
Or onward, where the rude Carinthian boor
Against the houseless stranger shuts the door,
Or where Campania's plain forsaken lies,
A weary waste expanding to the skies—
Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart, untravelled, fondly turns to thee,
Still to my brother turns, with ceaseless pain,
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain.

Eternal blessings crown my earliest friend,
And round his dwelling guardian saints attend.
Blest be that spot where cheerful guests retire
To pause from toil and trim their ev'ning fire;
Blest that abode where want and pain repair,

And every stranger finds a ready chair;
Blest be those feasts with simple plenty crowned,
Where all the ruddy family around
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale,
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good.

But me, not destined such delights to share,
My prime of life in wand'ring spent, and care,
Impelled with steps unceasing to pursue
Some fleeting good, that mocks me with the view,
That, like the circle bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet, as I follow, flies,
My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
And find no spot of all the world my own.

Even now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend,
And, placed on high above the storm's career,
Look downward where an hundred realms appear:
Lakes, forests, cities, plains extending wide,
The pomp of kings, the shepherd's humbler pride.

When thus Creation's charms around combine,
Amidst the store should thankless pride repine?
Say, should the philosophic mind disdain
That good which makes each humbler bosom vain?
Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,
These little things are great to little man,
And wiser he whose sympathetic mind
Exults in all the good of all mankind.
Ye glitt'ring towns with wealth and splendour crowned,
Ye fields where summer spreads profusion round,
Ye lakes whose vessels catch the busy gale,
Ye bending swains that dress the flow'ry vale,
For me your tributary stores combine:
Creation's heir, the world, the world is mine!

As some lone miser, visiting his store,
Bends at his treasure, counts, recounts it o'er,
Hoards after hoards his rising raptures fill,
Yet still he sighs, for hoards are wanting still:
Thus to my breast alternate passions rise,
Pleased with each good that Heaven to man supplies;

Yet oft a sigh prevails, and sorrows fall,
To see the hoard of human bliss so small,
And oft I wish amidst the scene to find
Some spot to real happiness consigned,
Where my worn soul, each wand'ring hope at rest,
May gather bliss to see my fellows blest.
But where to find that happiest spot below,
Who can direct, when all pretend to know?
The shudd'ring tenant of the frigid zone
Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own,
Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,
And his long nights of revelry and ease;
The naked negro, panting at the line,
Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine,
Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,
And thanks his gods for all the good they gave.
Such is the patriot's boast, where'er we roam:
His first, best country ever is at home.
And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare,
And estimate the blessings which they share,
Though patriots flatter, still shall wisdom find
An equal portion dealt to all mankind,
As different good, by Art or Nature given
To different nations, makes their blessings even.
Nature, a mother kind alike to all,
Still grants her bliss at Labour's earnest call:
With food as well the peasant is supplied
On Idra's cliffs as Arno's shelvy side,
And, though the rocky-crested summits frown,
These rocks by custom turn to beds of down.
From Art more various are the blessings sent,
Wealth, commerce, honour, liberty, content;
Yet these each other's power so strong contest,
That either seems destructive of the rest:
Where wealth and freedom reign contentment fails,
And honour sinks where commerce long prevails.
Hence every state, to one loved blessing prone,
Conforms and models life to that alone;
Each to the favourite happiness attends,
And spurns the plan that aims at other ends,
Till, carried to excess in each domain,

This favourite good begets peculiar pain.
But let us try these truths with closer eyes,
And trace them through the prospect as it lies;
Here, for a while, my proper cares resigned,
Here let me sit in sorrow for mankind,
Like yon neglected shrub at random cast,
That shades the steep, and sighs at every blast.
Far to the right, where Apennine ascends,
Bright as the summer Italy extends;
Its uplands, sloping, deck the mountain's side,
Woods over woods in gay theatric pride,
While oft some temple's mould'ring tops between
With venerable grandeur mark the scene.
Could Nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest:
Whatever fruits in different climes were found,
That proudly rise or humbly court the ground,
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear,
Whose bright succession decks the varied year,
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky
With vernal lives, that blossom but to die,
These, here disporting, own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil,
While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.
But small the bliss that sense alone bestows,
And sensual bliss is all the nation knows.
In florid beauty groves and fields appear;
Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.
Contrasted faults through all his manners reign:
Though poor, luxurious; though submissive, vain;
Though grave, yet trifling; zealous, yet untrue;
And ev'n in penance planning sins anew.
All evils here contaminate the mind
That opulence departed leaves behind;
For wealth was theirs; not far removed the date
When Commerce proudly flourished through the state:
At her command the palace learnt to rise,
Again the long-fallen column sought the skies,
The canvas glowed, beyond ev'n nature warm,
The pregnant quarry teemed with human form;

Till, more unsteady than the southern gale,
Commerce on other shores displayed her sail,
While naught remained of all that riches gave
But towns unmanned and lords without a slave,
And late the nation found, with fruitless skill,
Its former strength was but plethoric ill.

Yet still the loss of wealth is here supplied
By arts, the splendid wrecks of former pride;
From these the feeble heart and long-fall'n mind
An easy compensation seem to find.
Here may be seen, in bloodless pomp arrayed,
The pasteboard triumph and the cavalcade,
Processions formed for piety and love,
A mistress or a saint in every grove.
By sports like these are all their cares beguiled:
The sports of children satisfy the child.
Each nobler aim, repressed by long control,
Now sinks at last, or feebly mans the soul,
While low delights, succeeding fast behind,
In happier meanness occupy the mind:
As in those domes where Cæsars once bore sway,
Defaced by time and tottering in decay,
There in the ruin, heedless of the dead,
The shelter-seeking peasant builds his shed,
And, wond'ring man could want the larger pile,
Exults, and owns his cottage with a smile.

My soul, turn from them; turn we to survey
Where rougher climes a nobler race display—
Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansions tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread.
No product here the barren hills afford
But man and steel, the soldier and his sword;
No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,
But winter, ling'ring, chills the lap of May;
No zephyr fondly sues the mountain's breast,
But meteors glare and stormy glooms invest.

Yet still, even here, content can spread a charm,
Redress the clime, and all its rage disarm.
Though poor the peasant's hut, his feasts though small,
He sees his little lot the lot of all:
Sees no contiguous palace rear its head

To shame the meanness of his humble shed,
No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal
To make him loath his vegetable meal;
But calm, and bred in ignorance and toil,
Each wish contracting fits him to the soil.
Cheerful at morn he wakes from short repose,
Breasts the keen air, and carols as he goes;
With patient angle trolls the finny deep,
Or drives his venturous plow-share to the steep,
Or seeks the den where snow-tracks mark the way,
And drags the struggling savage into day.
At night returning, every labour sped,
He sits him down the monarch of a shed,
Smiles by his cheerful fire, and round surveys
His children's looks, that brighten at the blaze;
While his loved partner, boastful of her hoard,
Displays her cleanly platter on the board,
And haply, too, some pilgrim, thither led,
With many a tale repays the nightly bed.

Thus every good his native wilds impart
Imprints the patriot passion on his heart,
And even those ills that round his mansion rise
Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies.
Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms;
And as a child, when scaring sounds molest,
Clings close and closer to the mother's breast,
So the loud torrent and the whirlwind's roar
But bind him to his native mountains more.

Such are the charms to barren states assigned;
Their wants but few, their wishes all confined.
Yet let them only share the praises due:
If few their wants, their pleasures are but few,
For every want that stimulates the breast
Becomes a source of pleasure when redressed.
Whence from such lands each pleasing science flies
That first excites desire and then supplies:
Unknown to them, when sensual pleasures cloy,
To fill the languid pause with finer joy;
Unknown those powers that raise the soul to flame,
Catch every nerve, and vibrate through the frame.

Their level life is but a smould'ring fire,
Unquenched by want, unfanned by strong desire;
Unfit for raptures, or, if raptures cheer
On some high festival of once a year,
In wild excess the vulgar breast takes fire,
Till, buried in debauch, the bliss expire.

But not their joys alone thus coarsely flow:
Their morals, like their pleasures, are but low;
For, as refinement stops, from sire to son
Unaltered, unimproved, the manners run,
And love's and friendship's finely-pointed dart
Fall blunted from each indurated heart.
Some sterner virtues o'er the mountain's breast
May sit, like falcons cow'ring on the nest;
But all the gentler morals, such as play
Through life's more cultured walks and charm the way,
These, far dispersed, on timorous pinions fly,
To sport and flutter in a kinder sky.

To kinder skies, where gentler manners reign,
I turn; and France displays her bright domain.
Gay, sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleased with thyself, whom all the world can please,
How often have I led thy sportive choir,
With tuneless pipe, beside the murmuring Loire,
Where shading elms along the margin grew,
And freshened from the wave the zephyr flew!
And haply, though my harsh touch, faltering still,
But mocked all tune and marred the dancer's skill,
Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,
And dance forgetful of the noontide hour.
Alike all ages: dames of ancient days
Have led their children through the mirthful maze;
And the gay grandsire, skilled in gestic lore,
Has frisked beneath the burthen of threescore.

So blest a life these thoughtless realms display;
Thus idly busy rolls their world away.
Theirs are those arts that mind to mind endear,
For honour forms the social temper here:
Honour, that praise which real merit gains,
Or even imaginary worth obtains,
Here passes current; paid from hand to hand,

It shifts in splendid traffic round the land;
From courts to camps, to cottages it strays,
And all are taught an avarice of praise;
They please, are pleased; they give, to get, esteem,
Till, seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.
But while this softer art their bliss supplies,
It gives their follies also room to rise;
For praise, too dearly loved or warmly sought,
Enfeebles all internal strength of thought,
And the weak soul, within itself unblest,
Leans for all pleasure on another's breast.
Hence Ostentation here, with tawdry art,
Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart;
Here Vanity assumes her pert grimace,
And trims her robes of frieze with copper-lace;
Here beggar Pride defrauds her daily cheer,
To boast one splendid banquet once a year:
The mind still turns where shifting fashion draws,
Nor weighs the solid worth of self-applause.
To men of other minds my fancy flies,
Embosomed in the deep where Holland lies.
Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
Where the broad ocean leans against the land,
And, sedulous to stop the coming tide,
Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride.
Onward methinks, and diligently slow,
The firm, connected bulwark seems to grow,
Spreads its long arms amidst the wat'ry roar,
Scoops out an empire, and usurps the shore;
While the pent ocean, rising o'er the pile,
Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile:
The slow canal, the yellow-blossomed vale,
The willow-tufted bank, the gliding sail,
The crowded mart, the cultivated plain,—
A new creation rescued from his reign.
Thus while, around, the wave-subjected soil
Impels the native to repeated toil,
Industrious habits in each bosom reign,
And industry begets a love of gain.
Hence all the good from opulence that springs,
With all those ills superfluous treasure brings,

Are here displayed. Their much-loved wealth imparts
Convenience, plenty, elegance, and arts:
But view them closer, craft and fraud appear;
Even liberty itself is bartered here;
At gold's superior charms all freedom flies—
The needy sell it, and the rich man buys;
A land of tyrants, and a den of slaves,
Here wretches seek dishonourable graves,
And, calmly bent, to servitude conform,
Dull as their lakes that slumber in the storm.
Heavens! how unlike their Belgic sires of old—
Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold,
War in each breast, and freedom on each brow.
How much unlike the sons of Britain now!

Fired at the sound, my genius spreads her wing,
And flies where Britain courts the western spring,
Where lawns extend that scorn Arcadian pride,
And brighter streams than famed Hydaspis glide.
There all around the gentlest breezes stray;
There gentle music melts on every spray;
Creation's mildest charms are there combined:
Extremes are only in the master's mind.
Stern o'er each bosom Reason holds her state,
With daring aims irregularly great.
Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
I see the lords of human kind pass by,
Intent on high designs; a thoughtful band,
By forms unfashioned, fresh from Nature's hand,
Fierce in their native hardiness of soul,
True to imagined right, above control,
While even the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
And learns to venerate himself as man.

Thine, Freedom, thine the blessings pictured here,
Thine are those charms that dazzle and endear;
Too blest, indeed, were such without alloy,
But, fostered even by Freedom, ills annoy.
That independence Britons prize too high
Keeps man from man, and breaks the social tie;
The self-dependent lordlings stand alone,
All claims that bind and sweeten life unknown:
Here, by the bonds of nature feebly held,

Minds combat minds, repelling and repelled;
Ferments arise, imprisoned factions roar,
Repressed ambition struggles round her shore,
Till, over-wrought, the general system feels
Its motions stopt or frenzy fire the wheels.
Nor this the worst: as nature's ties decay,
As duty, love, and honour fail to sway,
Fictitious bonds, the bonds of wealth and law,
Still gather strength and force unwilling awe;
Hence all obedience bows to these alone,
And talent sinks, and merit weeps unknown;
Till time may come, when, stript of all her charms,
The land of scholars and the nurse of arms,
Where noble stems transmit the patriot flame,
Where kings have toiled and poets wrote for fame,
One sink of level avarice shall lie,
And scholars, soldiers, kings, unhonoured die.

Yet think not, thus when Freedom's ills I state,
I mean to flatter kings or court the great:
Ye Powers of truth that bid my soul aspire,
Far from my bosom drive the low desire!
And thou, fair Freedom taught alike to feel
The rabble's rage and tyrant's angry steel,
Thou transitory flower, alike undone
By proud contempt or favour's fostering sun,
Still may thy blooms the changeful clime endure!
I only would repress them to secure:
For just experience tells, in every soil,
That those who think must govern those that toil,
And all that Freedom's highest aims can reach
Is but to lay proportioned loads on each;
Hence, should one order disproportioned grow,
Its double weight must ruin all below.
O, then, how blind to all that truth requires,
Who think it freedom when a part aspires!
Calm is my soul, nor apt to rise in arms
Except when fast approaching danger warms:
But when contending chiefs blockade the throne,
Contracting regal power to stretch their own;
When I behold a factious band agree
To call it freedom when themselves are free;

Each wanton judge new penal statutes draw,
Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law;
The wealth of climes where savage nations roam
Pillaged from slaves to purchase slaves at home;
Fear, pity, justice, indignation start,
Tear off reserve, and bare my swelling heart,
Till, half a patriot, half a coward grown,
I fly from petty tyrants to the throne.
Yes, brother, curse with me that baleful hour
When first ambition struck at regal power,
And, thus polluting honour in its source,
Gave wealth to sway the mind with double force.
Have we not seen, round Britain's peopled shore,
Her useful sons exchanged for useless ore?
Seen all her triumphs but destruction haste,
Like flaring tapers brightening as they waste?
Seen Opulence, her grandeur to maintain,
Lead stern Depopulation in her train,
And, over fields where scattered hamlets rose,
In barren solitary pomp repose?
Have we not seen, at Pleasure's lordly call,
The smiling, long-frequented village fall?
Beheld the duteous son, the sire decayed,
The modest matron, and the blushing maid,
Forced from their homes, a melancholy train,
To traverse climes beyond the western main,
Where wild Oswego spreads her swamps around,
And Niagàra stuns with thund'ring sound?
Even now, perhaps, as there some pilgrim strays
Through tangled forests and through dangerous ways,
Where beasts with man divided empire claim,
And the brown Indian marks with murderous aim,
There, while above the giddy tempest flies,
And all around distressful yells arise,
The pensive exile, bending with his woe,
To stop too fearful, and too faint to go,
Casts a long look where England's glories shine,
And bids his bosom sympathize with mine.
Vain, very vain, my weary search to find
That bliss which only centres in the mind.
Why have I strayed from pleasure and repose,

To seek a good each government bestows?
In every government, though terrors reign,
Though tyrant kings or tyrant laws restrain,
How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure!
Still to ourselves in every place consigned,
Our own felicity we make or find:
With secret course, which no loud storms annoy,
Glides the smooth current of domestic joy;
The lifted ax, the agonizing wheel,
Luke's iron crown, and Damiens' bed of steel,
To men remote from power but rarely known,
Leave reason, faith, and conscience all our own.

1764.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheer'd the labouring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed;
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth when every sport could please,
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!
How often have I paused on every charm—
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topt the neighbouring hill,
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whisp'ring lovers made.
How often have I blest the coming day
When toil, remitting, lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labour free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree;
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old surveyed,
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went round;
And still, as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired:

The dancing pair that simply sought renown
By holding out to tire each other down;
The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter tittered round the place;
The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love,
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove.
These were thy charms, sweet village; sports like these,
With sweet succession taught even toil to please;
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed,
These were thy charms—but all these charms are fled.

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green:
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain.
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But, choked with sedges, works its weedy way;
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest;
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries;
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall;
And, trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay:
Princes and lords may flourish or may fade—
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintained its man:
For him light labour spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life required but gave no more;
His best companions, innocence and health;
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.
But times are altered; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain:
Along the lawn where scattered hamlets rose,

Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose,
And every want to opulence allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.
Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that asked but little room,
Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene,
Lived in each look and brightened all the green,
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn, parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds
Amidst thy tangling walks and ruined grounds,
And, many a year elapsed, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
Remembrance wakes, with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs—and God has given my share,—
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose:
I still had hopes—for pride attends us still—
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill;
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt and all I saw:
And as a hare whom hounds and horns pursue
Pants to the place from whence at first he flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return, and die at home at last.

O blest retirement, friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, that never must be mine,
How happy he who crowns, in shades like these,
A youth of labour with an age of ease,
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And, since 't is hard to combat, learns to fly.
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine or tempt the dangerous deep;
No surly porter stands in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate:

But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending Virtue's friend;
Bends to the grave with unperceived decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way;
And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past.

Sweet was the sound when oft, at evening's close,
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose;
There, as I passed with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came softened from below:
The swain responsive as the milkmaid sung,
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young,
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school,
The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whispering wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind;
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And filled each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail;
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
No busy steps the grass-grown footway tread,
For all the bloomy flush of life is fled—
All but yon widowed, solitary thing,
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron, forced in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her wintry faggot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn;
She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden-flower grows wild,
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year.
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed nor wished to change his place;
Unpractised he to fawn or seek for power,
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,

More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train;
He chid their wanderings but relieved their pain:
The long-remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard, descending, swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire and talked the night away,
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch and showed how fields were won.
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.
Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to Virtue's side;
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt, for all:
And as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.
Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain by turns dismayed,
The reverend champion stood: at his control,
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last, faltering accents whispered praise.
At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools who came to scoff remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;
Even children followed, with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth expressed;
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distrest;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven:

As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.
Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossomed furze unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
The village master taught his little school.
A man severe he was, and stern to view;
I knew him well, and every truant knew:
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laughed with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned.
Yet he was kind; or if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault.
The village all declared how much he knew:
'T was certain he could write, and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage;
And even the story ran that he could gauge.
In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,
For even though vanquished he could argue still,
While words of learned length and thundering sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew
That one small head could carry all he knew.
But past is all his fame; the very spot
Where many a time he triumphed is forgot:
Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,
Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspired,
Where graybeard Mirth and smiling Toil retired,
Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlor splendours of that festive place:
The whitewashed wall; the nicely sanded floor;
The varnished clock that clicked behind the door;
The chest contrived a double debt to pay—

A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures placed for ornament and use;
The twelve good rules; the royal game of goose;
The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,
With aspen boughs and flowers and fennel gay;
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.
Vain, transitory splendours! could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall?
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart.
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad, shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round,
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be prest,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.
    Yes, let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm than all the gloss of art.
Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway;
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined.
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth arrayed,
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain;
And, even while Fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart, distrusting, asks if this be joy.
    Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'T is yours to judge how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting Folly hails them from her shore;

Hoards even beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around.
Yet count our gains; this wealth is but a name,
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss: the man of wealth and pride
Takes up a space that many poor supplied—
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds;
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
Has robbed the neighbouring fields of half their growth;
His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies;
While thus the land, adorned for pleasure all,
In barren splendour feebly waits the fall.
As some fair female, unadorned and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
Slights every borrowed charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes;
But when those charms are past—for charms are frail,—
When time advances, and when lovers fail,
She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
In all the glaring impotence of dress:
Thus fares the land, by luxury betrayed,
In Nature's simplest charms at first arrayed;
But, verging to decline, its splendours rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise,
While, scourged by famine from the smiling land,
The mournful peasant leads his humble band;
And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms—a garden and a grave.
Where, then, ah where shall poverty reside,
To scape the pressure of contiguous pride?
If to some common's fenceless limits strayed,
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And even the bare-worn common is denied.
If to the city sped, what waits him there?
To see profusion that he must not share;

To see ten thousand baneful arts combined
To pamper luxury and thin mankind;
To see those joys the sons of pleasure know,
Extorted from his fellow-creatures' woe.
Here while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;
Here while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
The dome where Pleasure holds her midnight reign,
Here, richly decked, admits the gorgeous train;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare:
Sure, scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy;
Sure, these denote one universal joy!
Are these thy serious thoughts? Ah, turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless shivering female lies:
She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,
Has wept at tales of innocence distrest;
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn;
Now lost to all—her friends, her virtue, fled—
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
And, pinched with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour
When idly, first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel and robes of country brown.
Do thine, sweet Auburn, thine, the loveliest train,
Do thy fair tribes participate her pain?
Even now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread.
Ah, no! To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.
Far different there from all that charmed before,
The various terrors of that horrid shore:
Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
And fiercely shed intolerable day;
Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance crowned,

Where the dark scorpion gathers death around,
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake,
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
And savage men more murderous still than they;
While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies.
Far different these from every former scene—
The cooling brook, the grassy-vested green,
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only sheltered thefts of harmless love.

Good Heaven! what sorrows gloomed that parting day
That called them from their native walks away,
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly looked their last,
And took a long farewell, and wished in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main,
And, shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Returned and wept, and still returned to weep.
The good old sire the first prepared to go
To new-found worlds, and wept for others' woe;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wished for worlds beyond the grave.
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for a father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And blest the cot where every pleasure rose,
And kissed her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And clasped them close, in sorrow doubly dear,
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.

O Luxury! thou curst by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchanged are things like these for thee!
How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigour not their own:
At every draught more large and large they grow,

A bloated mass of rank, unwieldy woe;
Till, sapped their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.
Even now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done;
Even now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural Virtues leave the land.
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail,
That, idly waiting, flaps with every gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand:
Contented Toil, and hospitable Care,
And kind connubial Tenderness are there,
And Piety with wishes placed above,
And steady Loyalty, and faithful Love.
And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade,
Unfit in these degenerate times of shame
To catch the heart or strike for honest fame;
Dear, charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride,
Thou source of all my bliss and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so,
Thou guide by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!
Farewell! and oh, where'er thy voice be tried,
On Torno's cliffs or Pambamarca's side,
Whether where equinoctial fervours glow
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
Redress the rigours of the inclement clime;
Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain;
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain:
Teach him that states of native strength possessed,
Though very poor, may still be very blest;
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
As ocean sweeps the laboured mole away,
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

1770.

FROM

RETALIATION

Of old, when Scarron his companions invited,
Each guest brought his dish, and the feast was united;
If our landlord supplies us with beef and with fish,
Let each guest bring himself—and he brings the best dish:
Our Dean shall be venison, just fresh from the plains;
Our Burke shall be tongue, with the garnish of brains;
Our Will shall be wild-fowl of excellent flavor,
And Dick with his pepper shall heighten the savor;
Our Cumberland's sweet-bread its place shall obtain;
And Douglas is pudding, substantial and plain;
Our Garrick's a salad, for in him we see
Oil, vinegar, sugar, and saltness agree;
To make out the dinner, full certain I am
That Ridge is anchovy, and Reynolds is lamb,
That Hickey's a capon, and, by the same rule,
Magnanimous Goldsmith a gooseberry fool.
At a dinner so various, at such a repast,
Who'd not be a glutton and stick to the last?
Here, waiter, more wine! let me sit while I'm able,
Till all my companions sink under the table;
Then, with chaos and blunders encircling my head,
Let me ponder and tell what I think of the dead.

. . . . . .

Here lies our good Edmund, whose genius was such
We scarcely can praise it or blame it too much;
Who, born for the universe, narrowed his mind,
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind;
Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat
To persuade Tommy Townshend to lend him a vote;
Who, too deep for his hearers, still went on refining,
And thought of convincing while they thought of dining;
Though equal to all things, for all things unfit—
Too nice for a statesman, too proud for a wit,
For a patriot too cool, for a drudge disobedient,
And too fond of the right to pursue the expedient:
In short, 't was his fate, unemployed or in place, sir,
To eat mutton cold and cut blocks with a razor.

. . . . . .

Here Cumberland lies, having acted his parts,
The Terence of England, the mender of hearts;
A flattering painter, who made it his care
To draw men as they ought to be, not as they are:
His gallants are all faultless, his women divine,
And Comedy wonders at being so fine—
Like a tragedy-queen he has dizened her out,
Or rather like Tragedy giving a rout;
His fools have their follies so lost in a crowd
Of virtues and feelings that folly grows proud;
And coxcombs, alike in their failings alone,
Adopting his portraits, are pleased with their own.
Say, where has our poet this malady caught,
Or wherefore his characters thus without fault?
Say, was it that, vainly directing his view
To find out men's virtues, and finding them few,
Quite sick of pursuing each troublesome elf,
He grew lazy at last and drew from himself?

. . . . . .

Here lies David Garrick: describe me who can
An abridgment of all that was pleasant in man;
As an actor, confest without rival to shine;
As a wit, if not first, in the very first line.
Yet with talents like these, and an excellent heart,
The man had his failings, a dupe to his art:
Like an ill-judging beauty his colours he spread,
And beplastered with rouge his own natural red;
On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting—
'T was only that when he was off he was acting.
With no reason on earth to go out of his way,
He turned and he varied full ten times a day:
Though secure of our hearts, yet confoundedly sick
If they were not his own by finessing and trick;
He cast off his friends as a huntsman his pack,
For he knew when he pleased he could whistle them back.
Of praise a mere glutton, he swallowed what came,
And the puff of a dunce he mistook it for fame;
Till, his relish grown callous, almost to disease,
Who peppered the highest was surest to please.
But let us be candid, and speak out our mind:
If dunces applauded, he paid them in kind;

Ye Kenricks, ye Kellys, and Woodfalls so grave,
What a commerce was yours while you got and you gave!
How did Grub Street re-echo the shouts that you raised,
While he was be-Rosciused and you were bepraised!
But peace to his spirit, wherever it flies
To act as an angel and mix with the skies!
Those poets who owe their best fame to his skill
Shall still be his flatterers, go where he will;
Old Shakespeare receive him with praise and with love,
And Beaumonts and Bens be his Kellys above.

. . . . . .

Here Reynolds is laid, and, to tell you my mind,
He has not left a wiser or better behind.
His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand;
His manners were gentle, complying, and bland;
Still born to improve us in every part—
His pencil our faces, his manners our heart.
To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering,
When they judged without skill he was still hard of hearing;
When they talked of their Raphaels, Correggios and stuff,
He shifted his trumpet and only took snuff.

1774. 1774.

JAMES BEATTIE

FROM

THE MINSTREL

Lo where the stripling, rapt in wonder, roves
Beneath the precipice o'erhung with pine,
And sees on high, amidst th' encircling groves,
From cliff to cliff the foaming torrents shine,
While waters, woods, and winds in concert join,
And echo swells the chorus to the skies.
Would Edwin this majestic scene resign
For aught the huntsman's puny craft supplies?
Ah, no! he better knows great Nature's charms to prize.

And oft he traced the uplands, to survey,
When o'er the sky advanced the kindling dawn,

The crimson cloud, blue main, and mountain grey,
And lake dim-gleaming on the smoky lawn;
Far to the west the long, long vale withdrawn,
Where twilight loves to linger for a while.
And now he faintly kens the bounding fawn,
And villager abroad at early toil:
But lo! the sun appears, and heaven, earth, ocean smile.

And oft the craggy cliff he loved to climb,
When all in mist the world below was lost.
What dreadful pleasure! there to stand sublime,
Like shipwrecked mariner on desert coast,
And view th' enormous waste of vapour, tost
In billows, lengthening to th' horizon round,
Now scooped in gulfs, with mountains now embossed,
And hear the voice of mirth and song rebound,
Flocks, herds, and waterfalls, along the hoar profound!

In truth he was a strange and wayward wight,
Fond of each gentle and each dreadful scene.
In darkness and in storm he found delight,
Nor less than when on ocean-wave serene
The southern sun diffused his dazzling sheen.
Even sad vicissitude amused his soul;
And if a sigh would sometimes intervene,
And down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
A sigh, a tear, so sweet, he wished not to control.

. . . . . .

When the long-sounding curfew from afar
Loaded with loud lament the lonely gale,
Young Edwin, lighted by the evening star,
Lingering and listening, wandered down the vale.
There would he dream of graves, and corses pale,
And ghosts that to the charnel-dungeon throng,
And drag a length of clanking chain, and wail,
Till silenced by the owl's terrific song,
Or blast that shrieks by fits the shuddering isles along.

Or when the setting moon, in crimson dyed,
Hung o'er the dark and melancholy deep,

To haunted stream, remote from man, he hied,
Where fays of yore their revels wont to keep;
And there let Fancy rove at large, till sleep
A vision brought to his entrancèd sight.
And first, a wildly murmuring wind 'gan creep
Shrill to his ringing ear; then tapers bright,
With instantaneous gleam, illumed the vault of night.

Anon in view a portal's blazoned arch
Arose; the trumpet bids the valves unfold,
And forth an host of little warriors march,
Grasping the diamond lance and targe of gold.
Their look was gentle, their demeanour bold,
And green their helms and green their silk attire;
And here and there, right venerably old,
The long-robed minstrels wake the warbling wire,
And some with mellow breath the martial pipe inspire.

With merriment and song and timbrels clear,
A troop of dames from myrtle bowers advance;
The little warriors doff the targe and spear,
And loud enlivening strains provoke the dance.
They meet, they dart away, they wheel askance;
To right, to left, they thrid the flying maze;
Now bound aloft with vigorous spring, then glance
Rapid along: with many-coloured rays
Of tapers, gems, and gold, the echoing forests blaze.

. . . . . .

Oft when the winter storm had ceased to rave,
He roamed the snowy waste at even, to view
The cloud stupendous, from th' Atlantic wave
High-towering, sail along th' horizon blue;
Where, midst the changeful scenery, ever new,
Fancy a thousand wondrous forms descries,
More wildly great than ever pencil drew—
Rocks, torrents, gulfs, and shapes of giant size,
And glitt'ring cliffs on cliffs, and fiery ramparts rise.

Thence musing onward to the sounding shore,
The lone enthusiast oft would take his way,

Listening, with pleasing dread, to the deep roar
Of the wide-weltering waves. In black array
When sulphurous clouds rolled on th' autumnal day,
Even then he hastened from the haunt of man,
Along the trembling wilderness to stray,
What time the lightning's fierce career began,
And o'er heaven's rending arch the rattling thunder ran.

Responsive to the sprightly pipe when all
In sprightly dance the village youth were joined,
Edwin, of melody aye held in thrall,
From the rude gambol far remote reclined,
Soothed with the soft notes warbling in the wind.
Ah then all jollity seemed noise and folly
To the pure soul by Fancy's fire refined!
Ah, what is mirth but turbulence unholy
When with the charm compared of heavenly melancholy!

1766–71. 1771.

THOMAS CHATTERTON

FROM

BRISTOWE TRAGEDIE

OR THE DETHE OF SYR CHARLES BAWDIN

The feathered songster chaunticleer
Han wounde hys bugle horne,
And tolde the earlie villager
The commynge of the morne.

Kynge Edwarde sawe the ruddie streakes
Of lyghte eclypse the greie,
And herde the raven's crokynge throte
Proclayme the fated daie.

"Thou 'rt ryght," quod hee, "for, by the Godde
That syttes enthroned on hyghe,
Charles Bawdin and hys fellowes twaine
To-daie shall surelie die!"

. . . . . .

And nowe the bell beganne to tolle,
And claryonnes to sounde;
Syr Charles hee herde the horses feete
A prauncyng onne the grounde:

And just before the officers
His lovynge wyfe came ynne,
Weepynge unfeigned teeres of woe,
Wythe loude and dysmalle dynne.

"Sweet Florence, nowe I praie forbere!
Ynne quiet lett mee die:
Praie Godde thatt ev'ry Christian soule
Maye looke onne dethe as I.

"Sweet Florence, why these brinie teeres?
Theye washe my soule-awaie,
And almost make mee wyshe for lyfe,
Wyth thee, sweete dame, to staie.

"'Tys butt a journie I shalle goe
Untoe the lande of blysse.
Nowe, as a proofe of husbande's love,
Receive thys holie kysse."

Thenne Florence, fault'ring ynne her saie,
Tremblynge these wordyes spoke:
"Ah, cruele Edwarde! bloudie kynge!
My herte ys welle nyghe broke!

"Ah, sweete Syr Charles, why wylt thou goe
Wythoute thye lovynge wyfe?
The cruelle axe thatt cuttes thye necke,
Ytte eke shall ende mye lyfe."

And nowe the officers came ynne
To brynge Syr Charles awaie,
Whoe turnèdd toe hys lovynge wyfe,
And thus toe her dydd saie:

"I goe to lyfe, and nott to dethe.
Truste thou ynne Godde above,
And teache thye sonnes to feare the Lorde,
And ynne theyre hertes hym love:

"Teache them to runne the nobile race
Thatt I theyre fader runne.
Florence, shou'd dethe thee take—adieu!
Yee officers, leade onne."

Thenne Florence raved as anie madde,
And dydd her tresses tere:
"Oh staie, mye husbande, lorde, and lyfe!"
Syr Charles thenne dropt a teare.

'Tyll, tyrèdd oute wythe ravynge loud,
Shee fellen onne the flore:
Syr Charles exerted alle hys myghte,
And marched fromm oute the dore.

Uponne a sledde hee mounted thenne,
Wythe lookes fulle brave and swete;
Lookes thatt enshone ne moe concern
Thanne anie ynne the strete.

Before hym went the council-menne,
Ynne scarlet robes and golde,
And tassils spanglynge ynne the sunne,
Muche glorious to beholde.

The Freers of Seincte Augustyne next
Appearèd to the syghte,
Alle cladd ynne homelie russett weedes,
Of godlie monkysh plyghte;

Ynne diffraunt partes a godlie psaume
Moste sweetlie theye dydd chaunt:
Behynde theyre backes syx mynstrelles came,
Who tuned the strunge bataunt.

Thenne fyve-and-twentye archers came;
Echone the bowe dydd bende,
From rescue of kynge Henries friends
Syr Charles forr to defend.

Bolde as a lyon came Syr Charles,
Drawne onne a clothe-layde sledde,
Bye two blacke stedes ynne trappynges white,
Wyth plumes uponne theyre hedde.

Behynde hym fyve-and-twentye moe
Of archers stronge and stoute,
Wyth bended bowe echone ynne hande,
Marchèd ynne goodlie route.

Seincte Jameses Freers marchèd next;
Echone hys parte dydd chaunt:
Behynde theyre backes syx mynstrelles came,
Who tuned the strunge bataunt.

Thenne came the maior and eldermenne,
Ynne clothe of scarlett deck't;
And theyre attendyng menne echone,
Lyke Easterne princes trickt.

And after them a multitude
Of citizenns dydd thronge;
The wyndowes were alle fulle of heddes,
As hee dydd passe alonge.

And whenne hee came to the hyghe crosse,
Syr Charles dydd turne and saie,
"O thou thatt savest manne fromme synne,
Washe mye soule clean thys daie!"

Att the grete mynsterr wyndowe sat
The kynge ynne myckle state,
To see Charles Bawdin goe alonge
To hys most welcom fate.

Soone as the sledde drewe nyghe enowe
Thatt Edwarde hee myghte heare,
The brave Syr Charles hee dydd stande uppe,
And thus hys wordes declare:

"Thou seest mee, Edwarde! traytour vile!
Exposed to infamie;
Butt bee assured, disloyall manne,
I 'm greaterr nowe thanne thee!

"Bye foule proceedyngs, murdre, bloude,
Thou wearest nowe a crowne;
And hast appoynted mee to dye,
By power nott thyne owne.

"Thou thynkest I shall dye to-daie:
I have beene dede 'till nowe,
And soone shall lyve to weare a crowne
For aie uponne my browe;

"Whylst thou, perhapps, for som few yeares,
Shalt rule thys fickle lande,
To lett them knowe howe wyde the rule
'Twixt kynge and tyrant hande.

"Thye pow'r unjust, thou traytour slave,
Shall falle onne thye owne hedde"—
Fromm out of hearyng of the kynge
Departed thenne the sledde.

Kynge Edwarde's soule rushed to hys face;
Hee turned hys hedde awaie,
And to hys broder Gloucester
Hee thus dydd speke and saie:

"To hym that soe-much-dreaded dethe
Ne ghastlie terrors brynge.
Beholde the manne! hee spake the truthe:
Hee's greater thanne a kynge!"

"Soe lett hym die!" Duke Richard sayde;
"And maye echone oure foes
Bende downe theyre neckes to bloudie axe
And feede the carryon crowes!"

And nowe the horses gentlie drewe
Syr Charles uppe the hyghe hylle;
The axe dydd glysterr ynne the sunne,
Hys pretious bloude to spylle.

Syrr Charles dydd uppe the scaffold goe
As uppe a gilded carre
Of victorye, bye val'rous chiefs
Gayned ynne the bloudie warre.

. . . . . .

Thenne hee, wyth preestes, uponne hys knees,
A pray'r to Godde dydd make,
Beseechynge hym unto hymselfe
Hys partynge soule to take.

Thenne, kneelynge downe, hee layd hys hedde
Most seemlie onne the blocke;
Whyche fromme hys bodie fayre at once
The able heddes-manne stroke:

And oute the bloude beganne to flowe,
And rounde the scaffolde twyne;
And teares, enow to washe 't awaie,
Dydd flowe fromme each mann's eyne.

The bloudie axe hys bodie fayre
Ynnto foure parties cutte;
And ev'rye parte, and eke hys hedde,
Uponne a pole was putte.

One parte dydd rotte onne Kynwulph-hylle,
One onne the mynster-tower,
And one from off the castle-gate
The crowen dydd devoure;

The other onne Seyncte Powle's goode gate,
A dreery spectacle;
Hys hedde was placed onne the hyghe crosse,
Ynne hyghe-streete most nobile.

Thus was the ende of Bawdin's fate:
Godde prosper longe oure kynge,
And grante hee maye, wyth Bawdin's soule,
Ynne heav'n Godd's mercie synge!

By 1668. 1772.

THE ACCOUNTE OF W. CANYNGES FEAST

Thorowe the halle the belle han sounde;
Byelecoyle doe the Grave beseeme;

The ealdermenne doe sytte arounde,
And snoffelle oppe the cheorte steeme,
Lyche asses wylde ynne desarte waste
Swotelye the morneynge ayre doe taste.

Syche coyne theie ate; the minstrels plaie,
The dynne of angelles doe theie keepe;
Heie stylle, the guestes ha ne to saie,
Butte nodde yer thankes ande falle aslape.
Thus echone daie bee I to deene,
Gyf Rowley, Iscamm, or Tyb. Gorges be ne seene.

1777.

MYNSTRELLES SONGE

FYRSTE MYNSTRELLE

The boddynge flourettes bloshes atte the lyghte;
The mees be sprenged wyth the yellowe hue;
Ynn daiseyd mantels ys the mountayne dyghte;
The nesh yonge coweslepe bendethe wyth the dewe;
The trees enlefèd, yntoe Heavenne straughte,
Whenn gentle wyndes doe blowe to whestlyng dynne ys brought.

The evenynge commes, and brynges the dewe alonge;
The roddie welkynne sheeneth to the eyne;
Arounde the alestake Mynstrells synge the songe;
Yonge ivie rounde the doore poste do entwyne;
I laie mee onn the grasse; yette, to mie wylle,
Albeytte alle ys fayre, there lackethe somethynge stylle.

SECONDE MYNSTRELLE

So Adam thoughtenne, whann, ynn Paradyse,
All Heavenn and Erthe dyd hommage to hys mynde;
Ynn Womman alleyne mannès pleasaunce lyes;
As Instrumentes of joie were made the kynde.
Go, take a wyfe untoe thie armes, and see
Wynter and brownie hylles wyll have a charme for thee.

THYRDE MYNSTRELLE

Whanne Autumpne blake and sonne-brente doe appere,
With hys goulde honde guylteynge the falleynge lefe,
Bryngeynge oppe Wynterr to folfylle the yere,
Beerynge uponne hys backe the ripèd shefe;
Whan al the hyls wythe woddie sede ys whyte;
Whanne levynne-fyres and lemes do mete from far the syghte;

Whann the fayre apple, rudde as even skie,
Do bende the tree unto the fructyle grounde;
When joicie peres, and berries of blacke die,
Doe daunce yn ayre, and call the eyne arounde;
Thann, bee the even foule or even fayre,
Meethynckes mie hartys joie ys steyncèd wyth somme care.

SECONDE MYNSTRELLE

Angelles bee wrogte to bee of neidher kynde;
Angelles alleyne fromme chafe desyre bee free:
Dheere ys a somwhatte evere yn the mynde,
Yatte, wythout wommanne, cannot stylled bee;
Ne seyncte yn celles, botte, havynge blodde and tere,
Do fynde the spryte to joie on syghte of womanne fayre;

Wommen bee made, notte for hemselves, botte manne,
Bone of hys bone, and chyld of hys desire;
Fromme an ynutyle membere fyrste beganne,
Ywroghte with moche of water, lyttele fyre;
Therefore theie seke the fyre of love, to hete
The milkyness of kynde, and make hemselfes complete.

Albeytte wythout wommen menne were pheeres
To salvage kynde, and wulde botte lyve to slea,
Botte wommenne efte the spryghte of peace so cheres,
Tochelod yn Angel joie heie Angeles bee:
Go, take thee swythyn to thie bedde a wyfe;
Bee bante or blessed hie yn proovynge marryage lyfe.

By 1668. 1777.

O, SYNGE UNTOE MIE ROUNDELAIE

O, synge untoe mie roundelaie!
O, droppe the brynie teare wythe mee!
Daunce ne moe atte hallie daie;
Lycke a reynynge ryver bee:
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys death-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Blacke hys cryne as the wyntere nyghte,
Whyte hys rode as the sommer snowe,
Rodde hys face as the mornynge lyghte;
Cale he lyes ynne the grave belowe:
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys deathe-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Swote hys tyngue as the throstles note,
Quycke ynn daunce as thoughte canne bee,
Defte hys taboure, codgelle stote;
O! hee lyes bie the wyllowe tree:
Mie love ys dedde,
Gonne to hys deathe-bedde,
Alle underre the wyllowe tree.

Harke! the ravenne flappes hys wynge,
In the briered delle belowe;
Harke! the dethe-owle loude dothe synge,
To the nyghte-mares as heie goe:
Mie love ys dedde,
Gonne to hys deathe-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

See! the whyte moone sheenes onne hie;
Whyterre ys mie true loves shroude,
Whyterre yanne the mornynge skie,
Whyterre yanne the evenynge cloude:
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys deathe-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Heere, uponne mie true loves grave,
Schalle the baren fleurs be layde,
Nee one hallie Seyncte to save
Al the celness of a mayde:
Mie love ys dedde,
Gonne to hys deathe-bedde,
Alle under the wyllowe tree.

Wythe mie hondes I 'lle dente the brieres
Rounde his hallie corse to gre;
Ouphante fairie, lyghte youre fyres,
Heere mie boddie stylle schalle bee:
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys death-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Comme, wythe acorne-coppe and thorne
Drayne mie hartys blodde awaie;
Lyfe and all yttes goode I scorne,
Daunce bie nete, or feaste by daie:
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys death-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Waterre wytches, crownede wythe reytes,
Bere mee to yer leathalle tyde.
I die! I comme! mie true love waytes.—
Thos the damselle spake and dyed.

By 1668. 1777.

AN EXCELENTE BALADE OF CHARITIE

In Virgynè the sweltrie sun gan sheene,
And hotte upon the mees did caste his raie;
The apple rodded from its palie greene,
And the mole peare did bende the leafy spraie;
The peede chelandri sunge the livelong daie;
'T was nowe the pride, the manhode, of the yeare,
And eke the grounde was dighte in its most defte aumere.

The sun was glemeing in the midde of daie,
Deadde still the aire, and eke the welken blue;
When from the sea arist in drear arraie
A hepe of cloudes of sable sullen hue,
The which full fast unto the woodlande drewe,
Hiltring attenes the sunnis fetive face,
And the blacke tempeste swolne and gathered up apace.

Beneathe an holme, faste by a pathwaie side
Which dide unto Seyncte Godwine's covent lede,
A hapless pilgrim moneynge dyd abide,
Pore in his viewe, ungentle in his weede,
Longe bretful of the miseries of neede:
Where from the hailstone coulde the almer flie?
He had no housen theere, ne anie covent nie.

Look in his glommèd face, his spright there scanne:
Howe woe-be-gone, how withered, forwynd, deade!
Haste to thie church-glebe-house, ashrewed manne;
Haste to thie kiste, thie onlie dorture bedde:
Cale as the claie whiche will gre on thie hedde
Is Charitie and Love aminge highe elves;
Knightis and Barons live for pleasure and themselves.

The gathered storme is rype; the bigge drops falle;
The forswat meadowes smethe, and drenche the raine;
The comyng ghastness do the cattle pall,
And the full flockes are drivynge ore the plaine;
Dashde from the cloudes, the waters flott againe;
The welkin opes, the yellow levynne flies,
And the hot fierie smothe in the wide lowings dies.

Liste! now the thunder's rattling clymmynge sound
Cheves slowie on, and then embollen clangs,
Shakes the hie spyre, and, losst, dispended, drowned,
Still on the gallard eare of terroure hanges;
The windes are up, the lofty elmen swanges;
Again the levynne and the thunder poures,
And the full cloudes are braste attenes in stonen showers.

Spurreynge his palfrie oere the watrie plaine,
The Abbote of Seyncte Godwyne's convente came:
His chapournette was drented with the reine,
And his pencte gyrdle met with mickle shame;
He aynewarde tolde his bederoll at the same.
The storme encreasen, and he drew aside
With the mist almes-craver neere to the holme to bide.

His cope was all of Lyncolne clothe so fyne,
With a gold button fastened neere his chynne;
His sautremete was edged with golden twynne,
And his shoone pyke a loverds mighte have binne—
Full well it shewn he thoughten coste no sinne;
The trammels of the palfrye pleasde his sighte,
For the horse-millanare his head with roses dighte.

"An almes, sir prieste!" the droppynge pilgrim saide;
"O let me waite within your covente dore,
Till the sunne sheneth hie above our heade,
And the loude tempeste of the aire is oer.
Helpless and ould am I, alas! and poor;
No house, ne friend, ne moneie in my pouche;
All yatte I calle my owne is this my silver crouche."

"Varlet," replyd the Abbatte, "cease your dinne!
This is no season almes and prayers to give.
Mie porter never lets a faitour in;
None touch mie rynge who not in honour live."
And now the sonne with the blacke cloudes did stryve,
And shettynge on the grounde his glairie raie:
The Abbatte spurrde his steede, and eftsoones roadde awaie.

Once moe the skie was blacke, the thounder rolde:
Faste reyneynge oer the plaine a prieste was seen,
Ne dighte full proude, ne buttoned up in golde;
His cope and jape were graie, and eke were clene;
A Limitoure he was of order seene.
And from the pathwaie side then turnèd hee,
Where the pore almer laie binethe the holmen tree.

"An almes, sir priest!" the droppynge pilgrim sayde,
"For sweete Seyncte Marie and your order sake!"
The Limitoure then loosened his pouche threade,
And did thereoute a groate of silver take:
The mister pilgrim dyd for halline shake.
"Here, take this silver; it maie eathe thie care:
We are Goddes stewards all, nete of oure owne we bare.

"But ah, unhailie pilgrim, lerne of me
Scathe anie give a rentrolle to their Lorde.
Here, take my semecope—thou arte bare, I see;
'T is thyne; the Seynctes will give me mie rewarde."
He left the pilgrim, and his waie aborde.
Virgynne and hallie Seyncte, who sitte yn gloure,
Or give the mittee will or give the gode man power!

1770. 1777.

WILLIAM COWPER

THIS EVENING, DELIA, YOU AND I

This evening, Delia, you and I
Have managed most delightfully;
For with a frown we parted,
Having contrived some trifle that
We both may be much troubled at
And sadly disconcerted.

Yet well as each performed their part,
We might perceive it was but art,
And that we both intended
To sacrifice a little ease;
For all such petty flaws as these
Are made but to be mended.

You knew, dissembler! all the while,
How sweet it was to reconcile
After this heavy pelt;
That we should gain by this allay
When next we met, and laugh away
The care we never felt.

Happy! when we but seek to endure
A little pain, then find a cure,
By double joy requited;
For friendship, like a severed bone,
Improves and joins a stronger tone
When aptly reunited.

About 1752? 1825.

FROM

TABLE TALK

When Cromwell fought for pow'r, and while he reigned
The proud protector of the pow'r he gained,
Religion, harsh, intolerant, austere,
Parent of manners like herself severe,
Drew a rough copy of the Christian face,
Without the smile, the sweetness, or the grace;
The dark and sullen humour of the time
Judged ev'ry effort of the Muse a crime;
Verse in the finest mould of fancy cast
Was lumber in an age so void of taste.
But when the second Charles assumed the sway,
And arts revived beneath a softer day,
Then, like a bow long forced into a curve,
The mind, released from too constrained a nerve,
Flew to its first position with a spring
That made the vaulted roofs of Pleasure ring.
His court, the dissolute and hateful school
Of Wantonness, where vice was taught by rule,
Swarmed with a scribbling herd, as deep inlaid
With brutal lust as ever Circe made.
From these a long succession in the rage
Of rank obscenity debauched their age,
Nor ceased, till, ever anxious to redress
Th' abuses of her sacred charge the press,
The Muse instructed a well-nurtured train
Of abler votaries to cleanse the stain,
And claim the palm for purity of song,
That Lewdness had usurped and worn so long.
Then decent Pleasantry and sterling Sense,

That neither gave nor would endure offence,
Whipped out of sight, with satire just and keen,
The puppy pack that had defiled the scene.
In front of these came Addison. In him
Humour in holiday and sightly trim,
Sublimity and Attic taste, combined
To polish, furnish, and delight the mind.
Then Pope, as harmony itself exact,
In verse well disciplined, complete, compact,
Gave virtue and morality a grace
That, quite eclipsing Pleasure's painted face,
Levied a tax of wonder and applause,
Ev'n on the fools that trampled on their laws.
But he (his musical finesse was such—
So nice his ear, so delicate his touch)
Made poetry a mere mechanic art,
And ev'ry warbler has his tune by heart.

1780. 1782.

FROM

TRUTH

Yon ancient prude, whose withered features show
She might be young some forty years ago,
Her elbows pinioned close upon her hips,
Her head erect, her fan upon her lips,
Her eyebrows arched, her eyes both gone astray
To watch yon am'rous couple in their play,
With bony and unkerchiefed neck defies
The rude inclemency of wintry skies,
And sails with lappet-head and mincing airs,
Duly at clink of bell, to morning pray'rs.
To thrift and parsimony much inclined,
She yet allows herself that boy behind;
The shiv'ring urchin, bending as he goes,
With slipshod heels, and dewdrop at his nose,
His predecessor's coat advanced to wear,
Which future pages are yet doomed to share,
Carries her Bible tucked beneath his arm,
And hides his hands to keep his fingers warm.

She, half an angel in her own account,
Doubts not hereafter with the saints to mount,
Though not a grace appears, on strictest search,
But that she fasts and, item, goes to church.
Conscious of age, she recollects her youth,
And tells, not always with an eye to truth,
Who spanned her waist, and who, where'er he came,
Scrawled upon glass Miss Bridget's lovely name;
Who stole her slipper, filled it with tokay,
And drank the little bumper ev'ry day.
Of temper as envenomed as an asp,
Censorious, and her ev'ry word a wasp,
In faithful mem'ry she records the crimes,
Or real or fictitious, of the times,
Laughs at the reputations she has torn,
And holds them dangling at arm's length in scorn.
Such are the fruits of sanctimonious pride,
Of malice fed while flesh is mortified.
Take, madam, the reward of all your pray'rs,
Where hermits and where Brahmins meet with theirs;
Your portion is with them: nay, never frown,
But, if you please, some fathoms lower down.

1781. *1782.*

ON THE LOSS OF THE "ROYAL GEORGE"

Toll for the brave!
The brave that are no more!
All sunk beneath the wave,
Fast by their native shore!

Eight hundred of the brave,
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel,
And laid her on her side.

A land-breeze shook the shrouds,
And she was overset;
Down went the "Royal George,"
With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave!
Brave Kempenfelt is gone;
His last sea-fight is fought,
His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle,
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak,
She ran upon no rock:

His sword was in its sheath,
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men.

Weigh the vessel up,
Once dreaded by our foes!
And mingle with our cup
The tear that England owes.

Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again
Full-charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone,
His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the wave no more.

1782. 1803.

FROM

THE TASK

RURAL SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

How oft upon yon eminence our pace
Has slackened to a pause, and we have borne
The ruffling wind scarce conscious that it blew,
While Admiration, feeding at the eye
And still unsated, dwelt upon the scene!

Thence with what pleasure have we just discerned
The distant plough slow-moving, and beside
His lab'ring team, that swerved not from the track,
The sturdy swain diminished to a boy!
Here Ouse, slow winding through a level plain
Of spacious meads with cattle sprinkled o'er,
Conducts the eye along his sinuous course
Delighted. There, fast rooted in his bank,
Stand, never overlooked, our fav'rite elms,
That screen the herdsman's solitary hut;
While far beyond and overthwart the stream,
That as with molten glass inlays the vale,
The sloping land recedes into the clouds,
Displaying on its varied side the grace
Of hedge-row beauties numberless, square tow'r,
Tall spire, from which the sound of cheerful bells
Just undulates upon the list'ning ear,
Groves, heaths, and smoking villages remote.
Scenes must be beautiful which, daily viewed,
Please daily, and whose novelty survives
Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years;
Praise justly due to those that I describe.
Nor rural sights alone, but rural sounds,
Exhilarate the spirit, and restore
The tone of languid nature. Mighty winds,
That sweep the skirt of some far-spreading wood
Of ancient growth, make music not unlike
The dash of Ocean on his winding shore,
And lull the spirit while they fill the mind,
Unnumbered branches waving in the blast,
And all their leaves fast flutt'ring, all at once.
Nor less composure waits upon the roar
Of distant floods, or on the softer voice
Of neighb'ring fountain, or of rills that slip
Through the cleft rock, and, chiming as they fall
Upon loose pebbles, lose themselves at length
In matted grass, that with a livelier green
Betrays the secret of their silent course.
Nature inanimate employs sweet sounds,
But animated Nature sweeter still,
To soothe and satisfy the human ear.

Ten thousand warblers cheer the day, and one
The livelong night: nor these alone, whose notes
Nice-fingered Art must emulate in vain,
But cawing rooks, and kites that swim sublime
In still repeated circles, screaming loud,
The jay, the pie, and ev'n the boding owl
That hails the rising moon, have charms for me.
Sounds inharmonious in themselves and harsh,
Yet heard in scenes where peace forever reigns,
And only there, please highly for their sake.

HUMAN OPPRESSION

Oh for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless contiguity of shade,
Where rumour of oppression and deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful war,
Might never reach me more! My ear is pained,
My soul is sick, with ev'ry day's report
Of wrong and outrage with which earth is filled.
There is no flesh in man's obdurate heart,
It does not feel for man; the nat'ral bond
Of brotherhood is severed as the flax
That falls asunder at the touch of fire.
He finds his fellow guilty of a skin
Not coloured like his own, and, having pow'r
T' enforce the wrong, for such a worthy cause
Dooms and devotes him as his lawful prey.
Lands intersected by a narrow frith
Abhor each other. Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations who had else
Like kindred drops been mingled into one.
Thus man devotes his brother, and destroys;
And worse than all, and most to be deplored,
As human nature's broadest, foulest blot,
Chains him, and tasks him, and exacts his sweat
With stripes that Mercy, with a bleeding heart,
Weeps when she sees inflicted on a beast.
Then what is man? And what man seeing this,
And having human feelings, does not blush
And hang his head, to think himself a man?

I would not have a slave to till my ground,
To carry me, to fan me while I sleep,
And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth
That sinews bought and sold have ever earned.
No: dear as freedom is, and in my heart's
Just estimation prized above all price,
I had much rather be myself the slave
And wear the bonds than fasten them on him.
We have no slaves at home: then why abroad?
And they themselves, once ferried o'er the wave
That parts us, are emancipate and loosed.
Slaves cannot breathe in England; if their lungs
Receive our air, that moment they are free;
They touch our country, and their shackles fall.
That's noble, and bespeaks a nation proud
And jealous of the blessing. Spread it, then,
And let it circulate through ev'ry vein
Of all your empire; that where Britain's pow'r
Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too.

THE MODEL PREACHER

Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,
Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,
Paul should himself direct me. I would trace
His master-strokes, and draw from his design.
I would express him simple, grave, sincere;
In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,
And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,
And natural in gesture; much impressed
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
May feel it too; affectionate in look
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of grace to guilty men.
Behold the picture? Is it like? Like whom?
The things that mount the rostrum with a skip,
And then skip down again; pronounce a text,
Cry "Hem"; and reading what they never wrote,
Just fifteen minutes, huddle up their work,
And with a well-bred whisper close the scene?

COWPER, THE RELIGIOUS RECLUSE

I was a stricken deer that left the herd
Long since; with many an arrow deep infixed
My panting side was charged, when I withdrew
To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.
There was I found by One Who had Himself
Been hurt by th' archers. In His side He bore,
And in His hands and feet, the cruel scars.
With gentle force soliciting the darts,
He drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live.
Since then, with few associates, in remote
And silent woods I wander, far from those
My former partners of the peopled scene,
With few associates, and not wishing more.
Here much I ruminate, as much I may,
With other views of men and manners now
Than once, and others of a life to come.
I see that all are wand'rers, gone astray
Each in his own delusions; they are lost
In chase of fancied happiness, still wooed
And never won; dream after dream ensues,
And still they dream that they shall still succeed,
And still are disappointed: rings the world
With the vain stir. I sum up half mankind,
And add two-thirds of the remainder half,
And find the total of their hopes and fears
Dreams, empty dreams.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE POST

Hark! 't is the twanging horn! O'er yonder bridge,
That with its wearisome but needful length
Bestrides the wintry flood, in which the moon
Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright,
He comes, the herald of a noisy world,
With spattered boots, strapped waist, and frozen locks,
News from all nations lumb'ring at his back.
True to his charge, the close-packed load behind,
Yet careless what he brings, his one concern
Is to conduct it to the destined inn,
And, having dropped th' expected bag, pass on.

He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
Cold and yet cheerful; messenger of grief
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some,
To him indiff'rent whether grief or joy.
Houses in ashes, and the fall of stocks,
Births, deaths, and marriages, epistles wet
With tears that trickled down the writer's cheeks
Fast as the periods from his fluent quill,
Or charged with am'rous sighs of absent swains
Or nymphs responsive, equally affect
His horse and him, unconscious of them all.
But oh th' important budget, ushered in
With such heart-shaking music, who can say
What are its tidings? Have our troops awaked,
Or do they still, as if with opium drugged,
Snore to the murmurs of th' Atlantic wave?
Is India free, and does she wear her plumed
And jewelled turban with a smile of peace,
Or do we grind her still? The grand debate,
The popular harangue, the tart reply,
The logic, and the wisdom, and the wit,
And the loud laugh—I long to know them all;
I burn to set th' imprisoned wranglers free,
And give them voice and utt'rance once again.
Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round;
And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
That cheer but not inebriate; wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful ev'ning in.

WINTER SCENES IN THE COUNTRY

The verdure of the plain lies buried deep
Beneath the dazzling deluge; and the bents
And coarser grass, upspearing o'er the rest,
Of late unsightly and unseen, now shine
Conspicuous, and, in bright apparel clad
And fledged with icy feathers, nod superb.
The cattle mourn in corners where the fence
Screens them, and seem half-petrified to sleep

In unrecumbent sadness; there they wait
Their wonted fodder, not like hung'ring man,
Fretful if unsupplied, but silent, meek,
And patient of the slow-paced swain's delay.
He from the stack carves out th' accustomed load,
Deep-plunging and again deep-plunging oft
His broad, keen knife into the solid mass;
Smooth as a wall the upright remnant stands,
With such undeviating and even force
He severs it away; no needless care
Lest storms should overset the leaning pile
Deciduous, or its own unbalanced weight.
Forth goes the woodman, leaving unconcerned
The cheerful haunts of man, to wield the axe
And drive the wedge in yonder forest drear,
From morn to eve his solitary task.
Shaggy and lean and shrewd, with pointed ears
And tail cropped short, half lurcher and half cur,
His dog attends him: close behind his heel
Now creeps he slow; and now, with many a frisk
Wide scamp'ring, snatches up the drifted snow
With iv'ry teeth, or ploughs it with his snout;
Then shakes his powdered coat, and barks for joy.
Heedless of all his pranks, the sturdy churl
Moves right toward the mark, nor stops for aught
But now and then with pressure of his thumb
T' adjust the fragrant charge of a short tube
That fumes beneath his nose; the trailing cloud
Streams far behind him, scenting all the air.

THE BASTILE

Then shame to manhood, and opprobrious more
To France than all her losses and defeats
Old or of later date, by sea or land,
Her house of bondage worse than that of old
Which God avenged on Paraoh—the Bastile!
Ye horrid tow'rs, th' abode of broken hearts,
Ye dungeons and ye cages of despair,
That monarchs have supplied from age to age
With music such as suits their sov'reign ears—

The sighs and groans of miserable men,
There 's not an English heart that would not leap
To hear that ye were fallen at last, to know
That even our enemies, so oft employed
In forging chains for us, themselves were free:
For he that values liberty, confines
His zeal for her predominance within
No narrow bounds; her cause engages him
Wherever pleaded; 't is the cause of man.
There dwell the most forlorn of human kind,
Immured though unaccused, condemned untried,
Cruelly spared, and hopeless of escape.
There, like the visionary emblem seen
By him of Babylon, life stands a stump,
And filleted about with hoops of brass;
Still lives, though all its pleasant boughs are gone.
To count the hour-bell and expect no change;
And ever as the sullen sound is heard,
Still to reflect that though a joyless note
To him whose moments all have one dull pace,
Ten thousand rovers in the world at large
Account it music—that it summons some
To theatre, or jocund feast, or ball;
The wearied hireling finds it a release
From labour; and the lover, that has chid
Its long delay, feels ev'ry welcome stroke
Upon his heart-strings trembling with delight:
To fly for refuge from distracting thought
To such amusements as ingenious woe
Contrives, hard-shifting and without her tools—
To read engraven on the mouldy walls,
In stagg'ring types, his predecessor's tale,
A sad memorial, and subjoin his own;
To turn purveyor to an overgorged
And bloated spider, till the pampered pest
Is made familiar, watches his approach,
Comes at his call, and serves him for a friend;
To wear out time in numb'ring to and fro
The studs that thick emboss his iron door,
Then downward and then upward, then aslant
And then alternate, with a sickly hope

By dint of change to give his tasteless task
Some relish, till, the sum exactly found
In all directions, he begins again:—
Oh comfortless existence! hemmed around
With woes, which who that suffers would not kneel
And beg for exile or the pangs of death?
That man should thus encroach on fellow-man,
Abridge him of his just and native rights,
Eradicate him, tear him from his hold
Upon th' endearments of domestic life
And social, nip his fruitfulness and use,
And doom him for perhaps an heedless word
To barrenness and solitude and tears,
Moves indignation; makes the name of king
(Of king whom such prerogative can please)
As dreadful as the Manichean god,
Adored through fear, strong only to destroy.

SET NOT THY FOOT ON WORMS

I would not enter on my list of friends,
Though graced with polished manners and fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility, the man
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.
An inadvertent step may crush the snail
That crawls at ev'ning in the public path;
But he that has humanity, forewarned,
Will tread aside and let the reptile live.
The creeping vermin, loathsome to the sight,
And charged perhaps with venom, that intrudes,
A visitor unwelcome, into scenes
Sacred to neatness and repose—th' alcove,
The chamber, or refectory,—may die:
A necessary act incurs no blame.
Not so when, held within their proper bounds
And guiltless of offence, they range the air,
Or take their pastime in the spacious field:
There they are privileged; and he that hunts
Or harms them there is guilty of a wrong,
Disturbs th' economy of Nature's realm,
Who, when she formed, designed them an abode.

1783–84. 1785.

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. THROCKMORTON'S BULLFINCH

Ye nymphs, if e'er your eyes were red
With tears o'er hapless fav'rites shed,
O, share Maria's grief!
Her fav'rite, even in his cage
(What will not hunger's cruel rage?),
Assassined by a thief.

Where Rhenus strays his vines among,
The egg was laid from which he sprung;
And though by nature mute,
Or only with a whistle blest,
Well-taught, he all the sounds expressed
Of flageolet or flute.

The honours of his ebon poll
Were brighter than the sleekest mole;
His bosom, of the hue
With which Aurora decks the skies
When piping winds shall soon arise
To sweep away the dew.

Above, below, in all the house,
Dire foe alike of bird and mouse,
No cat had leave to dwell;
And Bully's cage supported stood
On props of smoothest-shaven wood,
Large built and latticed well.

Well latticed—but the grate, alas!
Not rough with wire of steel or brass,
For Bully's plumage sake,
But smooth with wands from Ouse's side,
With which, when neatly peeled and dried,
The swains their baskets make.

Night veiled the pole; all seemed secure;
When, led by instinct sharp and sure,
Subsistence to provide,
A beast forth sallied on the scout,
Long-backed, long-tailed, with whiskered snout,
And badger-coloured hide.

He, ent'ring at the study door,
Its ample area 'gan explore,
And something in the wind
Conjectured, sniffing round and round,
Better than all the books he found,
Food chiefly for the mind.

Just then, by adverse fate impressed,
A dream disturbed poor Bully's rest;
In sleep he seemed to view
A rat fast clinging to the cage,
And, screaming at the sad presage,
Awoke and found it true.

For, aided both by ear and scent,
Right to his mark the monster went—
Ah, Muse! forbear to speak
Minute the horrors that ensued:
His teeth were strong, the cage was wood,—
He left poor Bully's beak.

O, had he made that too his prey!
That beak, whence issued many a lay
Of such mellifluous tone,
Might have repaid him well, I wote,
For silencing so sweet a throat,
Fast stuck within his own.

Maria weeps, the Muses mourn;
So, when by Bacchanalians torn,
On Thracian Hebrus' side
The tree-enchanter Orpheus fell,
His head alone remained to tell
The cruel death he died.

1788. 1794.

ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE

O that those lips had language! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,

"Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!"
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
(Blest be the art that can immortalize,
The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim
To quench it) here shines on me still the same.
Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
Who bidd'st me honour with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long,
I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept were her own:
And, while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
Shall steep me in Elysian revery,
A momentary dream that thou art she.
My mother! when I learned that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unfelt, a kiss;
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah, that maternal smile! it answers "Yes."
I heard the bell tolled on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nurs'ry window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such? It was: where thou art gone
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wished I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived,
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of to-morrow even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
I learnt at last submission to my lot,
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.
Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more:

Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
And where the gard'ner Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapt
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet-capt,
'T is now become a history little known
That once we called the pastoral house our own.
Short-lived possession! But the record fair
That memory keeps, of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced.
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou mightst know me safe and warmly laid;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit or confectionary plum;
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestowed
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glowed;
All this, and, more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and breaks
That humour interposed too often makes;
All this, still legible in mem'ry's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honours to thee as my numbers may,
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorned in heaven though little noticed here.

Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flow'rs,
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
I pricked them into paper with a pin
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head and smile),
Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
I would not trust my heart—the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.
But no—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.

Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast,
The storms all weathered and the ocean crossed,
Shoots into port at some well-havened isle,
Where spices breathe and brighter seasons smile,
There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay,
So thou, with sails how swift, hast reached the shore
"Where tempests never beat nor billows roar,"
And thy loved consort on the dang'rous tide
Of life long since has anchored by thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distressed,
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-tossed,
Sails ripped, seams op'ning wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosp'rous course.
Yet, oh, the thought that thou art safe, and he,
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise—
The son of parents passed into the skies!
And now, farewell. Time unrevoked has run
His wonted course, yet what I wished is done:
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem t' have lived my childhood o'er again,
To have renewed the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine;
And while the wings of Fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimic show of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft—
Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

1790. 1798.

THE CASTAWAY

Obscurest night involved the sky,
Th' Atlantic billows roared,
When such a destined wretch as I,
Washed headlong from on board,

Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
His floating home forever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast
Than he with whom he went,
Nor ever ship left Albion's coast
With warmer wishes sent.
He loved them both, but both in vain,
Nor him beheld nor her again.

Not long beneath the whelming brine,
Expert to swim, he lay,
Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
Or courage die away,
But waged with death a lasting strife,
Supported by despair of life.

He shouted; nor his friends had failed
To check the vessel's course,
But so the furious blast prevailed
That, pitiless perforce,
They left their outcast mate behind,
And scudded still before the wind.

Some succor yet they could afford;
And such as storms allow,
The cask, the coop, the floated cord,
Delayed not to bestow.
But he (they knew) nor ship nor shore,
Whate'er they gave, should visit more.

Nor, cruel as it seemed, could he
Their haste himself condemn,
Aware that flight, in such a sea,
Alone could rescue them;
Yet bitter felt it still to die
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives who lives an hour
In ocean, self-upheld;
And so long he, with unspent pow'r,
His destiny repelled;

And ever, as the minutes flew,
Entreated help or cried "Adieu!"

At length, his transient respite past,
His comrades, who before
Had heard his voice in ev'ry blast,
Could catch the sound no more;
For then, by toil subdued, he drank
The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him; but the page
Of narrative sincere,
That tells his name, his worth, his age,
Is wet with Anson's tear:
And tears by bards or heroes shed
Alike immortalize the dead.

I therefore purpose not or dream,
Descanting on his fate,
To give the melancholy theme
A more enduring date;
But misery still delights to trace
Its semblance in another's case.

No voice divine the storm allayed,
No light propitious shone,
When, snatched from all effectual aid,
We perished each alone;
But I beneath a rougher sea,
And whelmed in deeper gulfs than he.

1799. 1803.

ROBERT FERGUSSON

THE DAFT DAYS

Now mirk December's dowie face
Glowrs owr the rigs wi' sour grimace,
While, thro' his minimum of space,
The bleer-eyed sun,
Wi' blinkin' light and stealing pace,
His race doth run.

From naked groves nae birdie sings;
To shepherd's pipe nae hillock rings;
The breeze nae od'rous flavour brings
From Borean cave;
And dwyning Nature droops her wings,
Wi' visage grave.

Mankind but scanty pleasure glean
Frae snawy hill or barren plain,
Whan Winter, 'midst his nipping train,
Wi' frozen spear,
Sends drift owr a' his bleak domain,
And guides the weir.

Auld Reikie! thou 'rt the canty hole,
A bield for mony a caldrife soul,
Wha snugly at thine ingle loll,
Baith warm and couth,
While round they gar the bicker roll
To weet their mouth.

When merry Yule Day comes, I trow,
You 'll scantlins find a hungry mou;
Sma' are our cares, our stamacks fou
O' gusty gear
And kickshaws, strangers to our view
Sin' fairn-year.

Ye browster wives, now busk ye bra,
And fling your sorrows far awa';
Then come and gie 's the tither blaw
O' reaming ale,
Mair precious than the Well of Spa,
Our hearts to heal.

Then, tho' at odds wi' a' the warl',
Amang oursells we 'll never quarrel;
Tho' Discord gie a cankered snarl
To spoil our glee,
As lang 's there 's pith into the barrel
We 'll drink and 'gree.

Fiddlers, your pins in temper fix,
And roset weel your fiddlesticks;
But banish vile Italian tricks
From out your quorum,
Nor *fortes* wi' *pianos* mix—
Gie's "Tullochgorum"!

For naught can cheer the heart sae weel
As can a canty Highland reel;
It even vivifies the heel
To skip and dance:
Lifeless is he wha canna feel
Its influence.

Let mirth abound; let social cheer
Invest the dawning of the year;
Let blithesome innocence appear,
To crown our joy;
Nor envy, wi' sarcastic sneer,
Our bliss destroy.

And thou, great god of *aqua vitæ!*
Wha sways the empire of this city,—
When fou we're sometimes capernoity,—
Be thou prepared
To hedge us frae that black banditti,
The City Guard.

1772.

BRAID CLAITH

Ye wha are fain to hae your name
Wrote in the bonny book of Fame,
Let merit nae pretension claim
To laureled wreath,
But hap ye weel, baith back and wame,
In gude Braid Claith.

He that some ells o' this may fa';
An' slae-black hat on pow like snaw,

Bids bauld to bear the gree awa',
Wi' a' this graith,
Whan bienly clad wi' shell fu' braw
O' gude Braid Claith.

Waesuck for him wha has nae fek o't!
For he 's a gowk they 're sure to geck at,
A chield that ne'er will be respekit
While he draws breath,
Till his four quarters are bedeckit
Wi' gude Braid Claith.

On Sabbath days the barber spark,
Whan he has done wi' scrapin' wark,
Wi' siller broachie in his sark
Gangs trigly, faith,
Or to the Meadows or the Park,
In gude Braid Claith.

Weel might ye trow, to see them there,
That they to shave your haffits bare,
Or curl an' sleek a pickle hair,
Wud be right laith,
Whan pacing wi' a gawsy air
In gude Braid Claith.

If ony mettled stirrah grien
For favour frae a lady's ein,
He mauna care for being seen
Before he sheath
His body in a scabbard clean
O' gude Braid Claith;

For gin he comes wi' coat threed-bare,
A feg for him she winna care,
But crook her bonny mou' fu' sair,
An' scald him baith:
Wooers shou'd ay their travel spare
Without Braid Claith.

Braid Claith lends fouk an unco heese,
Makes mony kail-worms butterflees,

Gies mony a doctor his degrees
For little skaith:
In short, you may be what you please
Wi' gude Braid Claith.

For thof ye had as wise a snout on
As Shakespeare or Sir Isaac Newton,
Your judgment fouk wud hae a doubt on,
I 'll tak' my aith,
Till they cou'd see ye wi' a suit on
O' gude Braid Claith.

1772.

ODE TO THE GOWDSPINK

Frae fields whare Spring her sweets has blawn
Wi' caller verdure o'er the lawn,
The gowdspink comes in new attire,
The brawest 'mang the whistling choir,
That, ere the sun can clear his een,
Wi' glib notes sane the simmer's green.
Sure Nature herried mony a tree,
For sprainges and bonny spats to thee;
Nae mair the rainbow can impart
Sic glowing ferlies o' her art,
Whase pencil wrought its freaks at will
On thee, the sey-piece o' her skill.
Nae mair through straths in simmer dight
We seek the rose to bless our sight,
Or bid the bonny wa'-flowers blaw
Whare yonder ruins crumblin' fa';
Thy shining garments far outstrip
The cherries upo' Hebe's lip,
And fool the tints that Nature chose
To busk and paint the crimson rose.
'Mang men, wae 's-heart! we aften find
The brawest drest want peace of mind,
While he that gangs wi' ragged coat
Is weel contentit wi' his lot.
Whan wand wi' glewy birdlime 's set,

To steal far aff your dautit mate,
Blyth wad ye change your cleething gay
In lieu of lav'rock's sober grey.
In vain thro' woods you sair may ban
Th' envious treachery of man,
That, wi' your gowden glister ta'en,
Still haunts you on the simmer's plain,
And traps you 'mang the sudden fa's
O' winter's dreary dreepin' snaws.
Now steekit frae the gowany field,
Frae ilka fav'rite houff and bield,
But mergh, alas! to disengage
Your bonny bouck frae fettering cage,
Your free-born bosom beats in vain
For darling liberty again.
In window hung, how aft we see
Thee keek around at warblers free,
That carol saft, and sweetly sing
Wi' a' the blythness of the spring!
Like Tantalus they hing you here
To spy the glories o' the year;
And tho' you 're at the burnie's brink,
They douna suffer you to drink.
Ah, Liberty! thou bonny dame,
How wildly wanton is thy stream,
Round whilk the birdies a' rejoice,
An' hail you wi' a gratefu' voice.
The gowdspink chatters joyous here,
And courts wi' gleesome sangs his peer;
The mavis frae the new-bloomed thorn
Begins his lauds at earest morn;
And herd-lowns, louping o'er the grass,
Need far less fleetching till their lass
Than paughty damsels bred at courts,
Wha thraw their mou's and take the dorts:
But, reft of thee, fient flee we care
For a' that life ahint can spare.
The gowdspink, that sae lang has kenned
Thy happy sweets (his wonted friend),
Her sad confinement ill can brook
In some dark chamber's dowy nook;

Tho' Mary's hand his nebb supplies,
Unkend to hunger's painfu' cries,
Ev'n beauty canna chear the heart
Frae life, frae liberty apart,
For now we tyne its wonted lay,
Sae lightsome sweet, sae blythely gay.
Thus Fortune aft a curse can gie,
To wyle us far frae liberty:
Then tent her syren smiles wha list,
I 'll ne'er envy your girnal's grist;
For whan fair Freedom smiles nae mair,
Care I for life? Shame fa' the hair:
A field o'ergrown wi' rankest stubble,
The essence of a paltry bubble.

1773.

JOHN SKINNER

TULLOCHGORUM

Come gie 's a sang! Montgomery cried,
And lay your disputes all aside;
What signifies 't for folk to chide
For what 's been done before 'em?
Let Whig and Tory all agree,
Whig and Tory, Whig and Tory,
Let Whig and Tory all agree
To drop their Whig-mig-morum!
Let Whig and Tory all agree
To spend the night in mirth and glee,
And cheerfu' sing, alang wi' me,
The reel o' Tullochgorum!

O, Tullochgorum 's my delight;
It gars us a' in ane unite;
And ony sumph' that keeps up spite,
In conscience I abhor him:
For blythe and cheery we 's be a',
Blythe and cheery, blythe and cheery,
Blythe and cheery we 's be a',
And mak a happy quorum;

For blythe and cheery we 's be a,'
As lang as we hae breath to draw,
And dance, till we be like to fa',
The reel o' Tullochgorum!

There needs na be sae great a phrase
Wi' dringing dull Italian lays;
I wadna gi'e our ain strathspeys
For half a hundred score o' 'em:
They 're douff and dowie at the best,
Douff and dowie, douff and dowie,
They 're douff and dowie at the best,
Wi' a' their variorum;
They 're douff and dowie at the best,
Their *allegros* and a' the rest;
They canna please a Scottish taste,
Compared wi' Tullochgorum.

Let warldly minds themselves oppress
Wi' fears of want and double cess,
And sullen sots themselves distress
Wi' keeping up decorum:
Shall we sae sour and sulky sit?
Sour and sulky, sour and sulky,
Shall we sae sour and sulky sit,
Like auld Philosophorum?
Shall we so sour and sulky sit,
Wi' neither sense nor mirth nor wit,
Nor ever rise to shake a fit
To the reel o' Tullochgorum?

May choicest blessings still attend
Each honest, open-hearted friend;
And calm and quiet be his end,
And a' that 's good watch o'er him!
May peace and plenty be his lot,
Peace and plenty, peace and plenty,
May peace and plenty be his lot,
And dainties a great store o' 'em!
May peace and plenty be his lot,
Unstained by any vicious spot,
And may he never want a groat
That 's fond o' Tullochgorum!

But for the dirty, yawning fool
Who wants to be Oppression's tool,
May envy gnaw his rotten soul,
And discontent devour him!
May dool and sorrow be his chance,
Dool and sorrow, dool and sorrow,
May dool and sorrow be his chance,
And nane say "wae's me" for him!
May dool and sorrow be his chance,
Wi' a' the ills that come frae France,
Whae'er he be, that winna dance
The reel o' Tullochgorum!

1776.

ROBERT BURNS

A PRAYER IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH

O Thou unknown, Almighty Cause
Of all my hope and fear!
In Whose dread presence, ere an hour,
Perhaps I must appear!

If I have wandered in those paths
Of life I ought to shun,
As something loudly in my breast
Remonstrates I have done,

Thou know'st that Thou hast formèd me
With passions wild and strong,
And list'ning to their witching voice
Has often led me wrong.

Where human weakness has come short,
Or frailty stept aside,
Do Thou, All Good—for such Thou art,—
In shades of darkness hide.

Where with intention I have erred,
No other plea I have
But, Thou art good; and Goodness still
Delighteth to forgive.

1781? 1786.

MY NANIE, O

Behind yon hills where Lugar flows,
'Mang moors an' mosses many, O,
The wintry sun the day has closed,
And I 'll awa to Nanie, O.

The westlin wind blaws loud an' shill,
The night 's baith mirk and rainy, O;
But I 'll get my plaid, an' out I 'll steal,
An' owre the hill to Nanie, O.

My Nanie 's charming, sweet, an' young;
Nae artfu' wiles to win ye, O:
May ill befa' the flattering tongue
That wad beguile my Nanie, O.

Her face is fair, her heart is true,
As spotless as she 's bonie, O:
The op'ning gowan, wat wi' dew,
Nae purer is than Nanie, O.

A country lad is my degree,
An' few there be that ken me, O;
But what care I how few they be?
I 'm welcome ay to Nanie, O.

My riches a 's my penny-fee,
An' I maun guide it cannie, O;
But warl's gear ne'er troubles me,
My thoughts are a'—my Nanie, O.

Our auld guidman delights to view
His sheep an' kye thrive bonie, O;
But I 'm as blythe that hauds his pleugh,
An' has nae care but Nanie, O.

Come weel, come woe, I care na by;
I 'll tak what Heav'n will send me, O;
Nae ither care in life have I
But live an' love my Nanie, O.

1784. 1787.

MARY MORISON

O Mary, at thy window be;
It is the wished, the trysted hour!
Those smiles and glances let me see
That make the miser's treasure poor!
How blythely wad I bide the stoure,
A weary slave frae sun to sun,
Could I the rich reward secure,
The lovely Mary Morison.

Yestreen, when to the trembling string
The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha',
To thee my fancy took its wing;
I sat, but neither heard or saw:
Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,
And yon the toast of a' the town,
I sighed, and said amang them a',
"Ye are na Mary Morison."

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace
Wha for thy sake wad gladly die?
Or canst thou break that heart of his
Whase only faut is loving thee?
If love for love thou wilt na gie,
At least be pity to me shown!
A thought ungentle canna be
The thought o' Mary Morison.

1784? 1800.

THE HOLY FAIR

Upon a simmer Sunday morn,
When Nature's face is fair,
I walkèd forth to view the corn,
An' snuff the caller air.
The rising sun, owre Galston muirs,
Wi' glorious light was glintin;
The hares were hirplin down the furs,
The lav'rocks they were chantin
Fu' sweet that day.

As lightsomely I glowered abroad,
To see a scene sae gay,
Three hizzies, early at the road,
Cam skelpin up the way.
Twa had manteeles o' dolefu' black,
But ane wi' lyart lining;
The third, that gaed a wee a-back,
Was in the fashion shining
Fu' gay that day.

The twa appeared like sisters twin,
In feature, form, an' claes;
Their visage withered, lang an' thin,
An' sour as onie slaes:
The third cam up, hap-step-an'-lowp,
As light as onie lambie,
An' wi' a curchie low did stoop,
As soon as e'er she saw me,
Fu' kind that day.

Wi' bonnet aff, quoth I, "Sweet lass,
I think ye seem to ken me;
I'm sure I've seen that bonie face,
But yet I canna name ye."
Quo' she, an' laughin as she spak,
An' taks me by the han's,
"Ye, for my sake, hae gi'en the feck
Of a' the Ten Comman's
A screed some day.

"My name is Fun—your cronie dear,
The nearest friend ye hae;
An' this is Superstition here,
An' that's Hypocrisy.
I'm gaun to Mauchline Holy Fair,
To spend an hour in daffin:
Gin ye'll go there, yon runkled pair,
We will get famous laughin
At them this day."

Quoth I, "Wi' a' my heart, I 'll do 't:
I 'll get my Sunday's sark on,
An' meet you on the holy spot;
Faith, we 'se hae fine remarkin!"
Then I gaed hame at crowdie-time,
An' soon I made me ready;
For roads were clad frae side to side
Wi' monie a wearie body,
In droves that day.

Here farmers gash, in ridin graith,
Gaed hoddin by their cotters;
There swankies young, in braw braid-claith,
Are springin owre the gutters.
The lasses, skelpin barefit, thrang,
In silks an' scarlets glitter;
Wi' sweet-milk cheese in monie a whang,
An' farls baked wi' butter,
Fu' crump that day.

When by the plate we set our nose,
Weel heapèd up wi' ha'pence,
A greedy glowr black bonnet throws,
An' we maun draw our tippence.
Then in we go to see the show:
On ev'ry side they 're gath'rin,
Some carryin dails, some chairs an' stools,
An' some are busy bleth'rin
Right loud that day.

. . . . . .

Here some are thinkin on their sins,
An' some upo' their claes;
Ane curses feet that fyled his shins,
Anither sighs and prays;
On this hand sits a chosen swatch,
Wi' screwed-up grace-proud faces;
On that a set o' chaps at watch,
Thrang winkin on the lasses
To chairs that day.

O happy is that man an' blest
(Nae wonder that it pride him!)
Wha's ain dear lass, that he likes best,
Comes clinkin down beside him!
Wi' arm reposed on the chair-back,
He sweetly does compose him;
Which, by degrees, slips round her neck,
An's loof upon her bosom,
Unkend that day.

Now a' the congregation o'er
Is silent expectation;
For Moodie speels the holy door
Wi' tidings o' damnation.
Should Hornie, as in ancient days,
'Mang sons o' God present him,
The vera sight o' Moodie's face
To's ain het hame had sent him
Wi' fright that day.

Hear how he clears the points o' faith
Wi' rattlin an wi' thumpin!
Now meekly calm, now wild in wrath,
He's stampin an' he's jumpin!
His lengthened chin, his turned-up snout,
His eldritch squeel an' gestures,
O how they fire the heart devout—
Like cantharidian plaisters,
On sic a day!

But hark! the tent has changed its voice;
There's peace an' rest nae langer;
For a' the real judges rise,
They canna sit for anger:
Smith opens out his cauld harangues
On practice and on morals;
An' aff the godly pour in thrangs,
To gie the jars an' barrels
A lift that day.

What signifies his barren shine
Of moral pow'rs an' reason?
His English style an' gesture fine
Are a' clean out o' season.
Like Socrates or Antonine,
Or some auld pagan heathen,
The moral man he does define,
But ne'er a word o' faith in
That 's right that day.

In guid time comes an antidote
Against sic poisoned nostrum;
For Peebles, frae the water-fit,
Ascends the holy rostrum:
See, up he 's got the word o' God,
An' meek an' mim has viewed it,
While Common Sense has taen the road,
An' aff, an' up the Cowgate
Fast, fast that day.

Wee Miller niest the guard relieves,
An' orthodoxy raibles,
Tho' in his heart he weel believes
An' thinks it auld wives' fables;
But faith! the birkie wants a manse,
So cannilie he hums them,
Altho' his carnal wit an' sense
Like hafflins-wise o'ercomes him
At times that day.

Now butt an' ben the change-house fills
Wi' yill-caup commentators;
Here 's crying out for bakes an' gills,
An' there the pint-stowp clatters;
While thick an' thrang, an' loud an' lang,
Wi' logic an' wi' Scripture,
They raise a din that in the end
Is like to breed a rupture
O' wrath that day.

Leeze me on drink! it gies us mair
Than either school or college;
It kindles wit, it waukens lear,
It pangs us fou o' knowledge.
Be't whisky-gill or penny-wheep,
Or onie stronger potion,
It never fails, on drinkin deep,
To kittle up our notion,
By night or day.

The lads an' lasses, blythely bent
To mind baith saul an' body,
Sit round the table weel content,
An' steer about the toddy.
On this ane's dress an' that ane's leuk
They're makin observations;
While some are cozie i' the neuk,
An' formin assignations
To meet some day.

But now the Lord's ain trumpet touts,
Till a' the hills are rairin,
And echoes back return the shouts;
Black Russell is na spairin:
His piercin words, like Highlan' swords,
Divide the joints an' marrow;
His talk o' hell, where devils dwell,
Our verra "sauls does harrow"
Wi' fright that day.

A vast, unbottomed, boundless pit,
Filled fou o' lowin brunstane,
Whase ragin flame an' scorchin heat
Wad melt the hardest whun-stane!
The half-asleep start up wi' fear,
An' think they hear it roarin,
When presently it does appear
'T was but some neebor snorin,
Asleep that day.

'T wad be owre lang a tale to tell
How monie stories passed,
An' how they crouded to the yill,
When they were a' dismist;
How drink gaed round in cogs an' caups,
Amang the furms an' benches,
An' cheese an' bread, frae women's laps,
Was dealt about in lunches
An' dawds that day.

In comes a gausie, gash guidwife,
An' sits down by the fire,
Syne draws her kebbuck an' her knife;
The lasses they are shyer;
The auld guidmen about the grace
Frae side to side they bother,
Till some ane by his bonnet lays
And gi'es them 't, like a tether,
Fu' lang that day.

Waesucks for him that gets nae lass,
Or lasses that hae naething!
Sma' need has he to say a grace,
Or melvie his braw claithing!
O wives, be mindfu', ance yoursel
How bonie lads ye wanted,
An' dinna for a kebbuck-heel
Let lasses be affronted
On sic a day!

Now Clinkumbell, wi' rattlin tow,
Begins to jow an' croon;
Some swagger hame the best they dow,
Some wait the afternoon.
At slaps the billies halt a blink,
Till lasses strip their shoon;
Wi' faith an' hope, an' love an' drink,
They 're a' in famous tune
For crack that day.

How monie hearts this day converts
O' sinners and o' lasses!
Their hearts o' stane, gin night, are gane
As saft as onie flesh is.
There's some are fou o' love divine,
There's some are fou o' brandy;
An' monie jobs that day begin,
May end in houghmagandie
Some ither day.

1785. 1786.

THE TWA DOGS

'T was in that place o' Scotland's isle
That bears the name of auld King Coil,
Upon a bonie day in June,
When wearing thro' the afternoon,
Twa dogs, that were na thrang at hame,
Forgathered ance upon a time.

The first I'll name, they ca'd him Cæsar,
Was keepit for "his Honour's" pleasure;
His hair, his size, his mouth, his lugs,
Shewed he was nane o' Scotland's dogs,
But whalpit some place far abroad,
Whare sailors gang to fish for cod.
His lockèd, lettered, braw brass collar
Shewed him the gentleman an' scholar:
But tho' he was o' high degree,
The fient a pride, nae pride had he,
But wad hae spent an hour caressin
Ev'n wi' a tinkler-gipsy's messin;
At kirk or market, mill or smiddie,
Nae tawted tyke, tho' e'er sae duddie,
But he wad stan't, as glad to see him,
An' stroan't on stanes and hillocks wi' him.

The tither was a ploughman's collie,
A rhyming, ranting, raving billie,
Wha for his friend an' comrade had him,
And in his freaks had Luath ca'd him,
After some dog in Highland sang,
Was made lang syne—Lord knows how lang.

He was a gash an' faithfu' tyke
As ever lap a sheugh or dyke.
His honest, sonsie, baws'nt face,
Ay gat him friends in ilka place;
His breast was white, his tousie back
Weel clad wi' coat o' glossy black;
His gawsie tail, wi' upward curl,
Hung owre his hurdies wi' a swirl.
Nae doubt but they were fain o' ither,
And unco pack an' thick thegither;
Wi' social nose whyles snuffed and snowkit;
Whyles mice an' moudieworts they howkit;
Whyles scoured awa in lang excursion,
An' worried ither in diversion;
Until wi' daffin weary grown,
Upon a knowe they sat them down,
An' there began a lang digression
About the "lords o' the creation."
Cæsar. I 've aften wondered, honest Luath,
What sort o' life poor dogs like you have;
An' when the gentry's life I saw,
What way poor bodies lives ava.
Our laird gets in his rackèd rents,
His coals, his kain, an' a' his stents;
He rises when he likes himsel;
His flunkies answer at the bell;
He ca's his coach, he ca's his horse;
He draws a bonie silken purse
As lang 's my tail, whare, thro' the steeks,
The yellow lettered Geordie keeks.
Frae morn to e'en it 's naught but toiling
At baking, roasting, frying, boiling;
An' though the gentry first are stechin,
Yet ev'n the ha' folk fill their pechan
Wi' sauce, ragouts, an' sic like trashtrie,
That 's little short o' downright wastrie.
Our whipper-in, wee, blastit wonner,
Poor worthless elf, it eats a dinner
Better than onie tenant man
His Honour has in a' the lan';
An' what poor cot-folk pit their painch in,

I own it's past my comprehension.
Luath. Trowth, Cæsar, whyles they're fash't eneugh:
A cotter howkin in a sheugh,
Wi' dirty stanes biggin a dyke,
Baring a quarry, an' sic like;
Himsel, a wife, he thus sustains,
A smytrie o' wee duddie weans,
An' naught but his han'-darg to keep
Them right an' tight in thack an' rape.
An' when they meet wi' sair disasters,
Like loss o' health or want o' masters,
Ye maist wad think a wee touch langer
An' they maun starve o' cauld and hunger.
But how it comes, I never kend yet,
They're maistly wonderfu' contented;
An' buirdly chiels an' clever hizzies
Are bred in sic a way as this is.
Cæsar. But then to see how ye're negleckit,
How huffed, an' cuffed an' disrespeckit!
Lord, man! our gentry care as little
For delvers, ditchers, an' sic cattle;
They gang as saucy by poor folk
As I wad by a stinking brock.
I've noticed, on our laird's court-day,
An' monie a time my heart's been wae,
Poor tenant bodies, scant o' cash,
How they maun thole a factor's snash:
He'll stamp an' threaten, curse an' swear;
He'll apprehend them, poind their gear;
While they maun staun' wi' aspect humble,
An' hear it a', an' fear an' tremble!
I see how folk live that hae riches;
But surely poor folk maun be wretches.
Luath. They're no sae wretched's ane wad think:
Tho' constantly on poortith's brink,
They're sae accustomed wi' the sight
The view o't gies them little fright.
Then chance an' fortune are sae guided
They're ay in less or mair provided;
An' tho' fatigued wi' close employment,

A blink o' rest's a sweet enjoyment.
The dearest comfort o' their lives,
Their grushie weans an' faithfu' wives;
The prattling things are just their pride,
That sweetens a' their fire-side.
An' whyles twalpennie worth o' nappy
Can mak the bodies unco happy;
They lay aside their private cares,
To mind the kirk and state affairs;
They 'll talk o' patronage an' priests,
Wi' kindling fury i' their breasts,
Or tell what new taxation 's comin,
An' ferlie at the folk in Lon'on.
As bleak-faced Hallowmass returns,
They get the jovial, ranting kirns,
When rural life, of ev'ry station,
Unite in common recreation;
Love blinks, Wit slaps, an' social Mirth
Forgets there 's Care upo' the earth.
That merry day the year begins,
They bar the door on frosty win's;
The nappy reeks wi' mantling ream,
An' sheds a heart-inspiring steam;
The luntin pipe an' sneeshin mill
Are handed round wi' right guid will;
The cantie auld folks crackin crouse,
The young anes ranting thro' the house—
My heart has been sae fain to see them
That I for joy hae barkit wi' them.
Still it 's owre true that ye hae said,
Sic game is now owre aften played.
There 's monie a creditable stock
O' decent, honest, fawsont folk
Are riven out, baith root an' branch,
Some rascal's pridefu' greed to quench,
Wha thinks to knit himsel the faster
In favour wi' some gentle master,
Wha, aiblins, thrang a-parliamentin',
For Britain's guid his saul indentin'.
Cæsar. Haith, lad, ye little ken about it:
For Britain's guid! guid faith, I doubt it.

Say rather, gaun as premiers lead him,
An' saying aye or no's they bid him;
At operas an' plays parading,
Mortgaging, gambling, masquerading;
Or maybe, in a frolic daft,
To Hague or Calais taks a waft,
To mak a tour, and tak a whirl,
To learn *bon ton* an' see the worl'.
There, at Vienna or Versailles,
He rives his father's auld entails;
Or by Madrid he taks the rout,
To thrum guitars an' fecht wi' nowt; . . . .
Then bowses drumlie German water,
To mak himsel look fair and fatter. . . . .
For Britain's guid!—for her destruction!
Wi' dissipation, feud, an' faction.
Luath. Hech, man! dear sirs! is that the gate
They waste sae monie a braw estate?
Are we sae foughten an' harassed
For gear ta gang that gate at last?
O, would they stay aback frae courts,
An' please themsels wi' countra sports,
It wad for ev'ry ane be better,
The laird, the tenant, an' the cotter!
For thae frank, rantin, ramblin billies,
Fient haet o' them's ill-hearted fellows;
Except for breakin o' their timmer,
Or speakin lightly o' their limmer,
Or shootin of a hare or moor-cock,
The ne'er-a-bit they're ill to poor folk.
But will ye tell me, Master Cæsar,
Sure great folk's life's a life o' pleasure.
Nae cauld or hunger e'er can steer them;
The vera thought o't need na fear them.
Cæsar. Lord, man, were ye but whyles whare I am,
The gentles, ye wad ne'er envy 'em.
It's true they need na starve or sweat,
Thro' winter's cauld or simmer's heat;
They've nae sair wark to craze their banes,
An' fill auld age wi' grips an' granes.
But human bodies are sic fools,
For a' their colleges an' schools,

That when nae real ills perplex them,
They mak enow themsels to vex them;
An' ay the less they hae to sturt them,
In like proportion less will hurt them.
A countra fellow at the pleugh,
His acre 's tilled, he 's right eneugh;
A countra girl at her wheel,
Her dizzen 's done, she 's unco weel:
But gentlemen, an' ladies warst,
Wi' ev'n down want o' wark are curst.
They loiter, lounging, lank an' lazy;
Tho' deil-haet ails them, yet uneasy;
Their days insipid, dull, an' tasteless;
Their nights unquiet, lang, an' restless;
An' ev'n their sports, their balls, an' races,
Their galloping thro' public places,
There 's sic parade, sic pomp, an' art,
The joy can scarcely reach the heart.
The men cast out in party matches,
Then sowther a' in deep debauches. . . . .
The ladies arm-in-arm in clusters,
As great an' gracious a' as sisters;
But hear their absent thoughts o' ither,
They 're a' run deils an' jads thegither.
Whyles, owre the wee bit cup an' platie,
They sip the scandal-potion pretty;
Or lee-lang nights, wi' crabbit leuks,
Pore owre the Devil's pictured beuks;
Stake on a chance a farmer's stackyard,
An' cheat like onie unhanged blackguard.
There 's some exceptions, man an' woman;
But this is gentry's life in common.

By this the sun was out o' sight,
An' darker gloamin brought the night;
The bum-clock hummed wi' lazy drone;
The kye stood rowtin i' the loan:
When up they gat, and shook their lugs,
Rejoiced they were na men, but dogs;
An' each took aff his several way,
Resolved to meet some ither day.

1785 or 1786. 1786.

POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY

Lament in rhyme, lament in prose,
Wi' saut tears tricklin down your nose;
Our bardie's fate is at a close,
Past a' remead;
The last sad cape-stane of his woes;
Poor Mailie's dead!

It's no the loss o' warl's gear
That could sae bitter draw the tear,
Or mak our bardie, dowie, wear
The mourning weed:
He's lost a friend an' neebor dear
In Mailie dead.

Thro' a' the toun she trotted by him;
A lang half-mile she could descry him;
Wi' kindly bleat, when she did spy him,
She ran wi' speed:
A friend mair faithfu' ne'er cam nigh him
Than Mailie dead.

I wat she was a sheep o' sense,
An' could behave hersel wi' mense:
I'll say't, she never brak a fence
Thro' thievish greed.
Our bardie, lanely, keeps the spence
Sin' Mailie's dead.

Or if he wanders up the howe,
Her livin image, in her yowe,
Comes bleatin till him, owre the knowe,
For bits o' bread;
An' down the briny pearls rowe
For Mailie dead.

She was nae get o' moorlan tips,
Wi' tawted ket an' hairy hips,
For her forbears were brought in ships
Frae 'yont the Tweed;
A bonier fleesh ne'er crossed the clips
Than Mailie's dead.

Wae worth the man wha first did shape
That vile, wanchancie thing—a rape!
It maks guid fellows girn an' gape,
Wi' chokin dread;
An' Robin's bonnet wave wi' crape
For Mailie dead.

O a' ye bards on bonie Doon
An' wha on Ayr your chanters tune,
Come, join the melancholious croon
O' Robin's reed!
His heart will never get aboon!
His Mailie's dead.

1786. 1786.

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

My loved, my honoured, much respected friend!
No mercenary bard his homage pays;
With honest pride, I scorn each selfish end,
My dearest meed a friend's esteem and praise:
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequester'd scene;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways,
What Aiken in a cottage would have been;
Ah, tho' his worth unknown, far happier there, I ween!

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;
The short'ning winter-day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh;
The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose.
The toil-worn cotter frae his labour goes—
This night his weekly moil is at an end,—
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward bend.

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;
Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin, stacher through
To meet their dad, wi' flichterin' noise and glee.

His wee bit ingle, blinkin bonilie,
His clean hearth-stane, his thrifty wifie's smile,
The lisping infant, prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary kiaugh and care beguile,
And makes him quite forget his labour and his toil.

Belyve the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, amang the farmers roun';
Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie rin
A cannie errand to a neebor town.
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman-grown,
In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,
Comes hame, perhaps to shew a braw new gown,
Or deposite her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear if they in hardship be.

With joy unfeigned, brothers and sisters meet,
And each for other's weelfare kindly spiers;
The social hours, swift-winged, unnoticed fleet;
Each tells the uncos that he sees or hears.
The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years;
Anticipation forward points the view.
The mother, wi' her needle and her sheers,
Gars auld claes look amaist as weel 's the new;
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due:

Their master's and their mistress's command
The younkers a' are warnèd to obey,
And mind their labours wi' an eydent hand,
And ne'er, tho' out o' sight, to jauk or play:
"And O be sure to fear the Lord alway,
And mind your duty duly, morn and night;
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
Implore His counsel and assisting might:
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright."

But hark! a rap comes gently to the door.
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neebor lad came o'er the moor,
To do some errands and convoy her hame.
The wily mother sees the conscious flame

Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek;
With heart-struck anxious care enquires his name,
While Jenny hafflins is afraid to speak;
Weel-pleased the mother hears it's nae wild, worthless rake.

With kindly welcome Jenny brings him ben:
A strappin' youth, he takes the mother's eye;
Blythe Jenny sees the visit's no ill-taen;
The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye.
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
But blate and laithfu', scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' and sae grave,
Weel-pleased to think her bairn's respected like the lave.

Oh happy love, where love like this is found!
Oh heart-felt raptures! bliss beyond compare!
I've pacèd much this weary, mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare:
"If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'T is when a youthful, loving, modest pair
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale."

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart,
A wretch! a villain! lost to love and truth!
That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
Curse on his perjured arts! dissembling, smooth!
Are honour, virtue, conscience, all exiled?
Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
Points to the parents fondling o'er their child?
Then paints the ruined maid, and their distraction wild?

But now the supper crowns their simple board:
The healsome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food:
The soupe their only hawkie does afford,
That 'yont the hallan snugly chows her cood.
The dame brings forth, in complimental mood,

To grace the lad, her weel-hained kebbuck, fell,
And aft he's prest and aft he ca's it guid;
The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell
How 't was a towmond auld sin' lint was i' the bell.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face
They round the ingle form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
The big ha'-Bible, ance his father's pride;
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales a portion with judicious care,
And "Let us worship God!" he says, with solemn air.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim:
Perhaps "Dundee's" wild-warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive "Martyrs," worthy of the name;
Or noble "Elgin" beets the heavenward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays.
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tickled ears no heart-felt raptures raise;
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page:
How Abram was the friend of God on high;
Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny;
Or how the royal bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire;
Or Job's pathetic plaint and wailing cry;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire;
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme:
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
How He Who bore in Heaven the second name
Had not on earth whereon to lay His head;
How His first followers and servants sped;

The precepts sage they wrote to many a land;
How he, who lone in Patmos banishèd,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced by Heaven's command.

Then kneeling down to heaven's Eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays;
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing,"
That thus they all shall meet in future days,
There ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear,
While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Compared with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method and of art,
When men display to congregations wide
Devotion's ev'ry grace except the heart!
The Power, incensed, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul,
And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll.

Then homeward all take off their sev'ral way;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest;
The parent-pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request
That He Who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide,
But chiefly in their hearts with grace divine preside.

From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad:
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
"An honest man's the noblest work of God."

And certes in fair virtue's heavenly road,
The cottage leaves the palace far behind:
What is a lordling's pomp? a cumbrous load,
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refined!

O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent!
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health and peace and sweet content!
And O may Heaven their simple lives prevent
From luxury's contagion, weak and vile!
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around their much-loved isle.

O Thou, Who poured the patriotic tide
That streamed thro' Wallace's undaunted heart,
Who dared to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part!
(The patriot's God peculiarly Thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!)
Oh never, never Scotia's realm desert,
But still the patriot and the patriot-bard
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard!

1785 or 1786. 1786.

TO A MOUSE

ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST, WITH THE PLOUGH, NOVEMBER, 1785

Wee, sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,
O what a panic 's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
Wi' murdering pattle!

I 'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,

An' justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen icker in a thrave
'S a sma' request;
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,
An' never miss 't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin!
An' naething now to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's win's ensuin,
Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell—
Till, crash! the cruel coulter passed
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee monie a weary nibble!
Now thou 's turned out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch cauld!

But mousie, thou art no thy lane
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us naught but grief an' pain
For promised joy!

Still, thou art blest compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But och! I backward cast my e'e,
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

1786.

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH IN APRIL, 1786

Wee, modest, crimson-tippèd flow'r,
Thou 's met me in an evil hour,
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem;
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonie gem.

Alas! it 's no thy neebor sweet,
The bonie lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,
Wi' spreckled breast,
When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce reared above the parent-earth
Thy tender form.

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
High shelt'ring woods and wa's maun shield;
But thou, beneath the random bield
O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histie stibble-field,
Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sunward spread,

Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade,
By love's simplicity betrayed,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soiled is laid,
Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starred!
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

Such fate to suffering worth is giv'n,
Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,
By human pride or cunning driv'n
To mis'ry's brink;
Till, wrenched of ev'ry stay but Heav'n,
He, ruined, sink!

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern Ruin's plough-share drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight
Shall be thy doom!

1786. 1786.

TO A LOUSE

ON SEEING ONE ON A LADY'S BONNET AT CHURCH

Ha! whare ye gaun, ye crowlin ferlie?
Your impudence protects you sairly;
I canna say but ye strunt rarely
Ower gauze and lace,
Tho', faith, I fear ye dine but sparely
On sic a place.

Ye ugly, creepin, blastit wonner,
Detested, shunned by saunt an' sinner,
How daur ye set your fit upon her,
Sae fine a lady!
Gae somewhere else, and seek your dinner
On some poor body.

Swith! in some beggar's hauffet squattle;
There ye may creep and sprawl and sprattle
Wi' ither kindred jumping cattle,
In shoals and nations,
Whare horn nor bane ne'er daur unsettle
Your thick plantations.

Now haud you there! ye're out o' sight,
Below the fatt'rils, snug an' tight;
Na, faith ye yet! ye'll no be right
Till ye 've got on it,
The vera tapmost, tow'ring height
O' Miss's bonnet.

My sooth! right bauld ye set your nose out,
As plump an' grey as onie grozet;
O for some rank, mercurial rozet
Or fell red smeddum!
I'd gie ye sic a hearty dose o't
Wad dress your droddum!

I wad na been surprised to spy
You on an auld wife's flainen toy,
Or aiblins some bit duddie boy,
On's wyliecoat;
But Miss's fine Lunardi—fie!
How daur ye do't!

O Jenny, dinna toss your head,
An' set your beauties a' abread!
Ye little ken what cursèd speed
The blastie's makin!
Thae winks an' finger-ends, I dread,
Are notice takin!

O wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as ithers see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us,
An' foolish notion;
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,
An' ev'n devotion!

1786.

FROM

EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK

I am nae poet, in a sense,
But just a rhymer like by chance,
An' hae to learning nae pretence;
Yet what the matter?
Whene'er my Muse does on me glance,
I jingle at her.

Your critic-folk may cock their nose,
And say, "How can you e'er propose,
You wha ken hardly verse frae prose,
To mak a sang?"
But, by your leaves, my learnèd foes,
Ye're maybe wrang.

What's a' your jargon o' your schools,
Your Latin names for horns an' stools?
If honest Nature made you fools,
What sairs your grammars?
Ye'd better taen up spades and shools
Or knappin-hammers.

A set o' dull, conceited hashes
Confuse their brains in college classes;
They gang in stirks, and come out asses,
Plain truth to speak;
An' syne they think to climb Parnassus
By dint o' Greek!

Gie me ae spark o' Nature's fire,
That's a' the learning I desire;

Then, tho' I drudge thro' dub an' mire
At pleugh or cart,
My Muse, though hamely in attire,
May touch the heart.

1785. *1786.*

ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH

Edina, Scotia's darling seat!
All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,
Where once, beneath a monarch's feet,
Sat Legislation's sov'reign pow'rs.
From marking wildly scatt'red flow'rs,
As on the banks of Ayr I strayed,
And singing, lone, the ling'ring hours,
I shelter in thy honoured shade.

Here Wealth still swells the golden tide,
As busy Trade his labours plies;
There Architecture's noble pride
Bids elegance and splendour rise;
Here Justice, from her native skies,
High wields her balance and her rod;
There Learning, with his eagle eyes,
Seeks Science in her coy abode.

Thy sons, Edina, social, kind,
With open arms the stranger hail;
Their views enlarged, their lib'ral mind,
Above the narrow, rural vale;
Attentive still to Sorrow's wail,
Or modest Merit's silent claim:
And never may their sources fail!
And never Envy blot their name!

Thy daughters bright thy walks adorn,
Gay as the gilded summer sky,
Sweet as the dewy milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptured thrill of joy!
Fair Burnet strikes th' adoring eye,
Heav'n's beauties on my fancy shine;
I see the Sire of Love on high,
And own His work indeed divine!

There, watching high the least alarms,
Thy rough, rude fortress gleams afar
Like some bold vet'ran, grey in arms,
And marked with many a seamy scar:
The pond'rous wall and massy bar,
Grim-rising o'er the rugged rock,
Have oft withstood assailing war,
And oft repelled th' invader's shock.

With awe-struck thought and pitying tears,
I view that noble, stately dome
Where Scotia's kings of other years,
Famed heroes, had their royal home:
Alas, how changed the times to come!
Their royal name low in the dust!
Their hapless race wild-wand'ring roam!
Tho' rigid Law cries out, "'T was just!"

Wild beats my heart to trace your steps,
Whose ancestors, in days of yore,
Thro' hostile ranks and ruined gaps
Old Scotia's bloody lion bore:
Ev'n I, who sing in rustic lore,
Haply my sires have left their shed,
And faced grim Danger's loudest roar,
Bold-following where your fathers led!

Edina, Scotia's darling seat!
All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,
Where once, beneath a monarch's feet,
Sat Legislation's sov'reign pow'rs.
From marking wildly-scatt'red flow'rs,
As on the banks of Ayr I strayed,
And singing, lone, the ling'ring hours,
I shelter in thy honoured shade.

1786. 1787.

GREEN GROW THE RASHES, O

CHORUS.—Green grow the rashes, O;
Green grow the rashes, O;
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend
Are spent among the lasses, O!

There 's naught but care on ev'ry han',
  In every hour that passes, O;
What signifies the life o' man
  An' 't were na for the lasses, O?

The war'ly race may riches chase,
  An' riches still may fly them, O;
An' tho' at last they catch them fast,
  Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O.

But gie me a cannie hour at e'en,
  My arms about my dearie, O,
An' war'ly cares an' war'ly men
  May a' gae tapsalteerie, O!

For you sae douce ye sneer at this,
  Ye 're naught but senseless asses, O:
The wisest man the warl' e'er saw,
  He dearly loved the lasses, O.

Auld Nature swears the lovely dears
  Her noblest work she classes, O;
Her prentice han' she tried on man,
  An' then she made the lasses, O.

1786. 1787.

OF A' THE AIRTS

Of a' the airts the wind can blaw,
  I dearly like the west,
For there the bonie lassie lives,
  The lassie I lo'e best:
There wild woods grow, and rivers row,
  And monie a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
  Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
  I see her sweet and fair;
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
  I hear her charm the air:

There 's not a bonie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green,
There 's not a bonie bird that sings,
But minds me o' my Jean.

1788. 1790.

AULD LANG SYNE

CHORUS.—For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We 'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne?

And surely ye 'll be your pint-stowp,
And surely I 'll be mine;
And we 'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

We twa hae run about the braes,
And pou'd the gowans fine;
But we 've wandered monie a weary fit
Sin' auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidled in the burn,
Frae morning sun till dine;
But seas between us braid hae roared
Sin' auld lang syne.

And there 's a hand, my trusty fiere,
And gie 's a hand o' thine;
And we 'll tak a right guid-willie waught,
For auld lang syne.

1788? 1796.

TAM GLEN

My heart is a-breaking, dear Tittie,
Some counsel unto me come len';
To anger them a' is a pity,
But what will I do wi' Tam Glen?

I 'm thinking, wi' sic a braw fellow
In poortith I might mak a fen';
What care I in riches to wallow,
If I mauna marry Tam Glen?

There 's Lowrie the laird o' Dumeller:
"Guid day to you"—brute!—he comes ben;
He brags and he blaws o' his siller,
But when will he dance like Tam Glen?

My minnie does constantly deave me,
And bids me beware o' young men:
They flatter, she says, to deceive me;
But wha can think sae o' Tam Glen?

My daddie says, gin I 'll forsake him,
He 'd gie me guid hunder marks ten;
But if it 's ordained I maun take him,
O wha will I get but Tam Glen?

Yestreen at the valentines' dealing,
My heart to my mou gied a sten;
For thrice I drew ane without failing,
And thrice it was written "Tam Glen."

The last Halloween I was waukin
My droukit sark-sleeve, as ye ken;
His likeness came up the house staukin,
And the very gray breeks o' Tam Glen!

Come, counsel, dear Tittie, don't tarry;
I 'll gie you my bonie black hen,
Gif ye will advise me to marry
The lad I lo'e dearly, Tam Glen.

1789.

JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO

John Anderson, my jo, John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonie brow was brent:

But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snaw;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither;
And monie a cantie day, John,
We 've had wi' ane anither:
Now we maun totter down, John,
And hand in hand we 'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo.

1790.

TAM O' SHANTER

When chapman billies leave the street,
And drouthy neebors neebors meet,
As market-days are wearing late,
An' folk begin to tak the gate,
While we sit bousing at the nappy,
An' getting fou and unco happy,
We think na on the lang Scots miles,
The mosses, waters, slaps, and stiles,
That lie between us and our hame,
Whare sits our sulky, sullen dame,
Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.
This truth fand honest Tam o' Shanter,
As he frae Ayr ae night did canter
(Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses
For honest men and bonie lasses).
O Tam, had'st thou but been sae wise
As taen thy ain wife Kate's advice!
She tauld thee weel thou was a skellum,
A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum,
That frae November till October
Ae market-day thou was nae sober;
That ilka melder wi' the miller
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;

That ev'ry naig was ca'd a shoe on
The smith and thee gat roaring fou on;
That at the Lord's house, even on Sunday,
Thou drank wi' Kirkton Jean till Monday.
She prophesied that, late or soon,
Thou would be found deep drowned in Doon,
Or catched wi' warlocks in the mirk
By Alloway's auld, haunted kirk.
Ah, gentle dames, it gars me greet
To think how monie counsels sweet,
How monie lengthened, sage advices,
The husband frae the wife despises!
But to our tale. Ae market-night
Tam had got planted unco right,
Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely,
Wi' reaming swats, that drank divinely;
And at his elbow, Souter Johnie,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy cronie:
Tam lo'ed him like a very brither;
They had been fou for weeks thegither.
The night drave on wi' sangs and clatter,
And ay the ale was growing better;
The landlady and Tam grew gracious,
Wi' secret favours, sweet and precious;
The souter tauld his queerest stories,
The landlord's laugh was ready chorus;
The storm without might rair and rustle,
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.
Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drowned himsel amang the nappy.
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes winged their way wi' pleasure:
Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious!
But pleasures are like poppies spread—
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts forever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form,

Evanishing amid the storm.
Nae man can tether time or tide:
The hour approaches Tam maun ride;
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane,
That dreary hour Tam mounts his beast in,
And sic a night he taks the road in
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

The wind blew as 't wad blawn its last;
The rattling showers rose on the blast;
The speedy gleams the darkness swallowed;
Loud, deep, and lang the thunder bellowed:
That night, a child might understand,
The Deil had business on his hand.

Weel-mounted on his gray mare Meg,
A better never lifted leg,
Tam skelpit on thro' dub and mire,
Despising wind and rain and fire;
Whiles holding fast his guid blue bonnet,
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet,
Whiles glow'ring round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles catch him unawares:
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
Whare ghaists and houlets nightly cry.

By this time he was cross the ford,
Whare in the snaw the chapman smoored;
And past the birks and meikle stane,
Whare drunken Charlie brak 's neck-bane;
And thro' the whins and by the cairn,
Whare hunters fand the murdered bairn;
And near the thorn, aboon the well,
Whare Mungo's mither hanged hersel.
Before him Doon pours all his floods;
The doubling storm roars thro' the woods;
The lightnings flash from pole to pole;
Near and more near the thunders roll;
When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
Kirk-Alloway seemed in a bleeze:
Thro' ilka bore the beams were glancing,
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.

Inspiring bold John Barleycorn,
What dangers thou canst make us scorn!

Wi' tippenny, we fear nae evil;
Wi' usquebae, we 'll face the Devil!
The swats sae reamed in Tammie's noddle,
Fair play, he cared na deils a boddle.
But Maggie stood, right sair astonished,
Till, by the heel and hand admonished,
She ventured forward on the light;
And, vow! Tam saw an unco sight!
Warlocks and witches in a dance;
Nae cotillion, brent new frae France,
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels
Put life and mettle in their heels.
A winnock-bunker in the east,
There sat Auld Nick, in shape o' beast;
A towsie tyke, black, grim, and large,
To gie them music was his charge:
He screwed the pipes and gart them skirl,
Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.
Coffins stood round, like open presses,
That shawed the dead in their last dresses,
And, by some devilish cantraip sleight,
Each in its cauld hand held a light:
By which heroic Tam was able
To note, upon the haly table,
A murderer's banes, in gibbet-airns;
Twa span-lang, wee, unchristened bairns;
A thief, new-cutted frae a rape—
Wi' his last gasp his gab did gape;
Five tomahawks, wi' bluid red-rusted;
Five scimitars, wi' murder crusted;
A garter which a babe had strangled;
A knife a father's throat had mangled,
Whom his ain son o' life bereft—
The grey-hairs yet stack to the heft;
Wi' mair of horrible and awfu',
Which even to name wad be unlawfu'.
As Tammie glowered, amazed and curious,
The mirth and fun grew fast and furious:
The piper loud and louder blew,
The dancers quick and quicker flew;
They reeled, they set, they crossed, they cleekit,

Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,
And coost her duddies to the wark,
And linket at it in her sark!
Now Tam, O Tam! had thae been queans,
A' plump and strapping in their teens!
Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flannen,
Been snaw-white seventeen-hunder linen!
Thir breeks o' mine, my only pair,
That ance were plush, o' guid blue hair,
I wad hae gi'en them off my hurdies,
For ae blink o' the bonie burdies!
But withered beldams, auld and droll,
Rigwoodie hags wad spean a foal,
Louping and flinging on a crummock,
I wonder didna turn thy stomach.
But Tam kend what was what fu' brawlie:
There was ae winsome wench and wawlie,
That night enlisted in the core,
Lang after kend on Carrick shore
(For monie a beast to dead she shot,
An' perished monie a bonie boat,
And shook baith meikle corn and bear,
And kept the country-side in fear).
Her cutty sark, o' Paisley harn,
That while a lassie she had worn,
In longitude tho' sorely scanty,
It was her best, and she was vauntie.
Ah, little kend thy reverend grannie
That sark she coft for her wee Nannie,
Wi' twa pund Scots ('t was a' her riches),
Wad ever graced a dance o' witches!
But here my Muse her wing maun cour;
Sic flights are far beyond her power:
To sing how Nannie lap and flang
(A souple jad she was and strang),
And how Tam stood like ane bewitched,
And thought his very een enriched.
Even Satan glowered and fidged fu' fain,
And hotched and blew wi' might and main;
Till first ae caper, syne anither,
Tam tint his reason a' thegither,

And roars out, "Weel done, Cutty-sark!"
And in an instant all was dark;
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
When out the hellish legion sallied.
As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke,
When plundering herds assail their byke;
As open pussie's mortal foes,
When, pop! she starts before their nose;
As eager runs the market-crowd,
When "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud;
So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
Wi' monie an eldritch skriech and hollo.
Ah, Tam! ah, Tam! thou'll get thy fairin!
In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin!
In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin!
Kate soon will be a woefu' woman!
Now do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
And win the key-stane of the brig;
There at them thou thy tail may toss—
A running stream they dare na cross!
But ere the key-stane she could make,
The fient a tail she had to shake!
For Nannie, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;
But little wist she Maggie's mettle!
Ae spring brought off her master hale,
But left behind her ain grey tail:
The carlin claught her by the rump,
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.
Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk man and mother's son, take heed:
Whene'er to drink you are inclined,
Or cutty sarks run in your mind,
Think ye may buy the joys o'er dear;
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare.

1790. 1791.

AE FOND KISS

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever!
Ae farewell, and then forever!

Deep in heart-wrung tears I 'll pledge thee;
Warring sighs and groans I 'll wage thee.
Who shall say that Fortune grieves him
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me,
Dark despair around benights me.

I 'll ne'er blame my partial fancy;
Naething could resist my Nancy:
But to see her was to love her,
Love but her and love forever.
Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met, or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare-thee-weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare-thee-weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure!
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae farewell, alas, forever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I 'll pledge thee;
Warring sighs and groans I 'll wage thee.

1791. 1792.

YE FLOWERY BANKS

Ye flowery banks o' bonie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!

Thou 'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings upon the bough!
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause luve was true.

Thou 'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Aft hae I roved by bonie Doon,
To see the woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its luve,
And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose
Frae aff its thorny tree;
And my fause luver staw my rose,
But left the thorn wi' me.

1791. 1808.

THE POSIE

O luve will venture in where it daur na weel be seen,
O luve will venture in where wisdom ance hath been;
But I will doun yon river rove, amang the wood sae green,
And a' to pu' a posie to my ain dear May.

The primrose I will pu', the firstling o' the year,
And I will pu' the pink, the emblem o' my dear,
For she 's the pink o' womankind, and blooms without a peer;
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

I 'll pu' the budding rose, when Phœbus peeps in view,
For it 's like a baumy kiss o' her sweet bonie mou;
The hyacinth 's for constancy, wi' its unchanging blue;
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

The lily it is pure, and the lily it is fair,
And in her lovely bosom I 'll place the lily there;
The daisy 's for simplicity and unaffected air;
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

The hawthorn I will pu', wi' its locks o' siller grey,
Where, like an aged man, it stands at break o' day,
But the songster's nest within the bush I winna tak away;
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

The woodbine I will pu' when the e'ening star is near,
And the diamond draps o' dew shall be her een sae clear;
The violet 's for modesty, which weel she fa's to wear;
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

I 'll tie the posie round wi' the silken band o' luve,
And I 'll place it in her breast, and I 'll swear by a' above
That to my latest draught o' life the band shall ne'er remove;
And this will be a posie to my ain dear May.

1792.

SAW YE BONIE LESLEY

O saw ye bonie Lesley
As she gaed o'er the Border?
She 's gane, like Alexander,
To spread her conquests farther.

To see her is to love her,
And love but her forever;
For Nature made her what she is,
And never made anither!

Thou art a queen, fair Lesley;
Thy subjects we, before thee:
Thou art divine, fair Lesley;
The hearts o' men adore thee.

The Deil he could na scaith thee,
Or aught that wad belang thee;
He 'd look into thy bonie face,
And say, "I canna wrang thee."

The Powers aboon will tent thee;
Misfortune sha'na steer thee;
Thou 'rt, like themsel, sae lovely
That ill they 'll ne'er let near thee.

Return again, fair Lesley,
Return to Caledonie!
That we may brag we hae a lass
There 's nane again sae bonie.

1792. 1798.

DUNCAN GRAY

Duncan Gray cam here to woo
(Ha, ha, the wooing o 't!),
On blythe Yule Night when we were fou
(Ha, ha, the wooing o 't!).

Maggie coost her head fu' high,
Looked asklent and unco skeigh,
Gart poor Duncan stand abeigh—
Ha, ha, the wooing o't!

Duncan fleeched, and Duncan prayed
(Ha, ha, the wooing o't!);
Meg was deaf as Ailsa craig
(Ha, ha, the wooing o't!).
Duncan sighed baith out and in,
Grat his een baith bleer't an' blin',
Spak o' lowpin o'er a linn—
Ha, ha, the wooing o't!

Time and chance are but a tide
(Ha, ha, the wooing o't!):
Slighted love is sair to bide
(Ha, ha, the wooing o't!).
"Shall I, like a fool," quoth he,
"For a haughty hizzie die?
She may gae to—France for me!"—
Ha, ha, the wooing o't!

How it comes let doctors tell
(Ha, ha, the wooing o't!):
Meg grew sick as he grew hale
(Ha, ha, the wooing o't!);
Something in her bosom wrings,
For relief a sigh she brings;
And O her een, they spak sic things:—
Ha, ha, the wooing o't!

Duncan was a lad o' grace
(Ha, ha, the wooing o't!),
Maggie's was a piteous case
(Ha, ha, the wooing o't!):
Duncan could na be her death,
Swelling pity smoored his wrath;
Now they're crouse and canty baith—
Ha, ha, the wooing o't!

1792. 1798.

HIGHLAND MARY

Ye banks and braes and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There Summer first unfald her robes,
And there the langest tarry!
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As, underneath their fragrant shade,
I clasped her to my bosom!
The golden hours, on angel wings,
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me as light and life
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' monie a vow and locked embrace,
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder.
But O fell Death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod and cauld's the clay
That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now those rosy lips
I aft hae kissed sae fondly!
And closed for ay the sparkling glance
That dwalt on me sae kindly!
And mouldering now in silent dust
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary!

1792. 1799.

SCOTS WHA HAE

Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots wham Bruce has aften led,

Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victorie!

Now's the day, and now's the hour!
See the front o' battle lour!
See approach proud Edward's power—
Chains and slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand or freeman fa',
Let him follow me!

By Oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Let us do or die!

1793. 1794.

IS THERE FOR HONEST POVERTY

Is there for honest poverty
That hings his head, an' a' that?
The coward slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that an' a' that,
Our toils obscure, an' a' that:
The rank is but the guinea's stamp;
The man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hoddin grey, an' a' that?
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that,

For a' that an' a' that,
Their tinsel show, an' a' that:
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie ca'd a lord,
Wha struts, an' stares, an' a' that;
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
He 's but a cuif for a' that,
For a' that an' a' that,
His ribband, star, an' a' that:
The man o' independent mind,
He looks an' laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, an' a' that,
But an honest man 's aboon his might;
Guid faith, he mauna fa' that!
For a' that an' a' that,
Their dignities, an' a' that:
The pith o' sense an' pride o' worth
Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may
(As come it will for a' that),
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
Shall bear the gree, an' a' that:
For a' that an' a' that,
It 's comin yet for a' that,
That man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brithers be for a' that.

1794. 1795.

CONTENTED WI' LITTLE

Contented wi' little, and cantie wi' mair,
Whene'er I forgather wi' sorrow and care,
I gie them a skelp, as they 're creepin alang,
Wi' a cog o' guid swats and an auld Scottish sang.

I whyles claw the elbow o' troublesome thought:
But man is a soger, and life is a faught;
My mirth and guid humour are coin in my pouch,
And my freedom 's my lairdship nae monarch daur touch.

A towmond o' trouble, should that be my fa',
A night o' guid fellowship sowthers it a';
When at the blythe end o' our journey at last,
Wha the Deil ever thinks o' the road he has passed?

Blind Chance, let her snapper and stoyte on her way,
Be 't to me, be 't frae me, e'en let the jade gae;
Come ease, or come travail, come pleasure or pain,
My warst word is, "Welcome, and welcome again!"

1794. 1799.

LASSIE WI' THE LINT-WHITE LOCKS

CHORUS.—Lassie wi' the lint-white locks,
Bonie lassie, artless lassie,
Wilt thou wi' me tent the flocks?
Wilt thou be my dearie, O?

Now Nature cleeds the flowery lea,
And a' is young and sweet like thee;
O wilt thou share its joys wi' me,
And say thou 'll be my dearie, O?

The primrose bank, the wimpling burn,
The cuckoo on the milk-white thorn,
The wanton lambs at early morn,
Shall welcome thee, my dearie, O.

And when the welcome simmer shower
Has cheered ilk drooping little flower,
We 'll to the breathing woodbine bower
At sultry noon, my dearie, O.

When Cynthia lights, wi' silver ray,
The weary shearer's hameward way,
Thro' yellow waving fields we 'll stray,
And talk o' love, my dearie, O.

And when the howling wintry blast
Disturbs my lassie's midnight rest,
Enclaspèd to my faithfu' breast,
I 'll comfort thee, my dearie, O.

1794. 1800.

A RED, RED ROSE

O my luve is like a red, red rose,
That 's newly sprung in June:
O my luve is like the melodie
That 's sweetly played in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry:

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve!
And fare thee weel awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile!

1796.

LAST MAY A BRAW WOOER

Last May a braw wooer cam down the lang glen,
And sair wi' his love he did deave me:
I said there was naething I hated like men;
The deuce gae wi 'm to believe me, believe me,
The deuce gae wi 'm to believe me!

He spak o' the darts in my bonie black een,
And vowed for my love he was dyin:
I said he might die when he liket for Jean;
The Lord forgie me for lyin, for lyin,
The Lord forgie me for lyin!

A weel-stocket mailen, himsel for the laird,
And marriage aff-hand, were his proffers:
I never loot on that I kenned it or cared;
But thought I might hae waur offers, waur offers,
But thought I might hae waur offers.

But what wad ye think? in a fortnight or less—
The Deil tak his taste to gae near her!—
He up the Gate Slack to my black cousin Bess:
Guess ye how, the jad, I could bear her, could bear her!
Guess ye how, the jad, I could bear her!

But a' the niest week as I petted wi' care,
I gaed to the tryste o' Dalgarnock,
And wha but my fine fickle lover was there:
I glowered as I 'd seen a warlock, a warlock,
I glowered as I 'd seen a warlock.

But owre my left shouther I gae him a blink,
Lest neebours might say I was saucy:
My wooer he capered as he 'd been in drink,
And vowed I was his dear lassie, dear lassie,
And vowed I was his dear lassie.

I spiered for my cousin fu' couthy and sweet,
Gin she had recovered her hearin,
And how her new shoon fit her auld shachled feet—
But, heavens, how he fell a swearin, a swearin!
But, heavens, how he fell a swearin!

He begged, for Gudesake, I wad be his wife,
Or else I wad kill him wi' sorrow;
So, e'en to preserve the poor body in life,
I think I maun wed him to-morrow, to-morrow,
I think I maun wed him to-morrow.

By 1795. 1799.

O, WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST

O, wert thou in the cauld blast,
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I 'd shelter thee, I 'd shelter thee;
Or did misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
Thy bield should be my bosom,
To share it a', to share it a'.

Or were I in the wildest waste,
  Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
The desert were a paradise
  If thou wert there, if thou wert there;
Or were I monarch of the globe,
  Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The brightest jewel in my crown
  Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

1796. 1800.

WILLIAM BLAKE

SONG

How sweet I roamed from field to field,
And tasted all the summer's pride,
Till I the Prince of Love beheld,
Who in the sunny beams did glide.

He showed me lilies for my hair,
And blushing roses for my brow;
He led me through his gardens fair,
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

With sweet May dews my wings were wet,
And Phoebus fired my vocal rage;
He caught me in his silken net,
And shut me in his golden cage.

He loves to sit and hear me sing,
Then, laughing, sports and plays with me;
Then stretches out my golden wing,
And mocks my loss of liberty.

1783.

INTRODUCTION

TO "SONGS OF INNOCENCE"

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he, laughing, said to me,

"Pipe a song about a lamb!"
So I piped with merry cheer.
"Piper, pipe that song again!"
So I piped: he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!"
So I sang the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down, and write
In a book, that all may read."
So he vanished from my sight;
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

1789.

THE ECHOING GREEN

The sun does arise,
And make happy the skies;
The merry bells ring,
To welcome the spring;
The skylark and thrush,
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around
To the bells' cheerful sound;
While our sports shall be seen
On the echoing green.

Old John, with white hair,
Does laugh away care,
Sitting under the oak,
Among the old folk.
They laugh at our play,
And soon they all say,
"Such, such were the joys
When we all, girls and boys,
In our youth-time were seen
On the echoing green."

. Till the little ones, weary,
No more can be merry;
The sun does descend,
And our sports have an end.
Round the laps of their mothers
Many sisters and brothers,
Like birds in their nest,
Are ready for rest,
And sport no more seen
On the darkening green.

1789.

THE LAMB

Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little lamb, I'll tell thee;
Little lamb, I'll tell thee:
He is callèd by thy name,
For He calls Himself a Lamb.
He is meek, and He is mild,
He became a little child,
I a child and thou a lamb,
We are callèd by His name.
Little lamb, God bless thee!
Little lamb, God bless thee!

1789.

HOLY THURSDAY

'T was on a Holy Thursday, their innocent faces clean,
The children walking two and two, in red and blue and green;

Grey-headed beadles walked before, with wands as white as snow;
Till into the high dome of Paul's they like Thames' waters flow.

Oh what a multitude they seemed, these flowers of London town!
Seated in companies, they sit with radiance all their own.
The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes of lambs,
Thousands of little boys and girls raising their innocent hands.

Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice of song,
Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven among.
Beneath them sit the agèd men, wise guardians of the poor;
Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door.

1789.

A DREAM

Once a dream did weave a shade
O'er my angel-guarded bed,
That an emmet lost its way
Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled, 'wildered, and forlorn,
Dark, benighted, travel-worn,
Over many a tangled spray,
All heart-broke, I heard her say:

"Oh my children! do they cry,
Do they hear their father sigh?
Now they look abroad to see,
Now return and weep for me."

Pitying, I dropped a tear;
But I saw a glow-worm near,
Who replied: "What wailing wight
Calls the watchman of the night?

"I am set to light the ground,
While the beetle goes his round:
Follow now the beetle's hum;
Little wanderer, hie thee home!"

1789.

THE BOOK OF THEL

I

The daughters of the seraphim led round their sunny flocks,—
All but the youngest; she in paleness sought the secret air,
To fade away like morning beauty from her mortal day.
Down by the river of Adona her soft voice is heard,
And thus her gentle lamentation falls like morning dew:
"O life of this our spring, why fades the lotus of the water?
Why fade these children of the spring, born but to smile and fall?
Ah, Thel is like a watery bow, and like a parting cloud,
Like a reflection in a glass, like shadows in the water,
Like dreams of infants, like a smile upon an infant's face,
Like the dove's voice, like transient day, like music in the air.
Ah, gentle may I lay me down, and gentle rest my head,
And gentle sleep the sleep of death, and gentle hear the voice
Of Him That walketh in the garden in the evening time!"
The lily of the valley, breathing in the humble grass,
Answered the lovely maid, and said: "I am a watery weed,
And I am very small, and love to dwell in lowly vales;
So weak the gilded butterfly scarce perches on my head.
Yet I am visited from heaven; and He That smiles on all
Walks in the valley, and each morn over me spreads His hand,
Saying, 'Rejoice, thou humble grass, thou new-born lily-flower,
Thou gentle maid of silent valleys and of modest brooks;
For thou shalt be clothed in light, and fed with morning manna,
Till summer's heat melts thee beside the fountains and the springs,
To flourish in eternal vales.' Then why should Thel complain?
Why should the mistress of the vales of Har utter a sigh?"
She ceased, and smiled in tears, then sat down in her silver shrine.
Thel answered: "O thou little virgin of the peaceful valley,
Giving to those that cannot crave, the voiceless, the o'ertired,
Thy breath doth nourish the innocent lamb; he smells thy milky garments,
He crops thy flowers, while thou sittest smiling in his face,
Wiping his mild and meekin mouth from all contagious taints.
Thy wine doth purify the golden honey; thy perfume,
Which thou dost scatter on every little blade of grass that springs,

Revives the milkèd cow, and tames the fire-breathing steed.
But Thel is like a faint cloud kindled at the rising sun:
I vanish from my pearly throne, and who shall find my place?"
"Queen of the vales," the lily answered, "ask the tender cloud,
And it shall tell thee why it glitters in the morning sky,
And why it scatters its bright beauty through the humid air.
Descend, O little cloud, and hover before the eyes of Thel."
The cloud descended; and the lily bowed her modest head,
And went to mind her numerous charge among the verdant grass.

II

"O little cloud," the virgin said, "I charge thee tell to me
Why thou complainest not, when in one hour thou fad'st away;
Then we shall seek thee, but not find. Ah, Thel is like to thee:
I pass away; yet I complain, and no one hears my voice."
The cloud then showed his golden head, and his bright form emerged,
Hovering and glittering on the air, before the face of Thel.
"O virgin, know'st thou not our steeds drink of the golden springs
Where Luvah doth renew his horses? Look'st thou on my youth,
And fearest thou because I vanish and am seen no more?
Nothing remains. O maid, I tell thee, when I pass away,
It is to tenfold life, to love, to peace, and raptures holy.
Unseen, descending, weigh my light wings upon balmy flowers,
And court the fair-eyed Dew to take me to her shining tent:
The weeping virgin, trembling, kneels before the risen sun,
Till we arise, linked in a golden band, and never part,
But walk united, bearing food to all our tender flowers."
"Dost thou, O little cloud? I fear that I am not like thee:
For I walk through the vales of Har, and smell the sweetest flowers,
But I feed not the little flowers; I hear the warbling birds,
But I feed not the warbling birds—they fly and seek their food.
But Thel delights in these no more, because I fade away,
And all shall say, 'Without a use this shining woman lived,
Or did she only live to be at death the food of worms?'"
The cloud reclined upon his airy throne, and answered thus:
"Then if thou art the food of worms, O virgin of the skies,

How great thy use, how great thy blessing! Everything that lives
Lives not alone nor for itself. Fear not, and I will call
The weak worm from its lowly bed, and thou shalt hear its voice.
Come forth, worm of the silent valley, to thy pensive queen!"
The helpless worm arose, and sat upon the lily's leaf,
And the bright cloud sailed on to find his partner in the vale.

III

Then Thel, astonished, viewed the worm upon its dewy bed.
"Art thou a worm, image of weakness? art thou but a worm?
I see thee, like an infant, wrapped in the lily's leaf.
Ah, weep not, little voice! thou canst not speak, but thou canst weep.
Is this a worm? I see thee lie helpless and naked, weeping,
And none to answer, none to cherish thee with mother's smiles."
The clod of clay heard the worm's voice, and raised her pitying head;
She bowed over the weeping infant, and her life exhaled
In milky fondness; then on Thel she fixed her humble eyes:
"O beauty of the vales of Har! we live not for ourselves.
Thou seest me, the meanest thing, and so I am indeed.
My bosom of itself is cold, and of itself is dark;
But He That loves the lowly pours His oil upon my head,
And kisses me, and binds His nuptial bands around my breast,
And says, 'Thou mother of my children, I have loved thee,
And I have given thee a crown that none can take away.'
But how this is, sweet maid, I know not, and I cannot know;
I ponder, and I cannot ponder; yet I live and love!"
The daughter of beauty wiped her pitying tears with her white veil,
And said: "Alas! I knew not this, and therefore did I weep.
That God would love a worm I knew, and punish the evil foot
That wilful bruised its helpless form; but that He cherished it
With milk and oil, I never knew, and therefore did I weep.
And I complained in the mild air, because I fade away,
And lay me down in thy cold bed, and leave my shining lot."
"Queen of the vales," the matron clay answered, "I heard thy sighs,

And all thy moans flew o'er my roof, but I have called them down.
Wilt thou, O queen, enter my house? 'T is given thee to enter,
And to return: fear nothing; enter with thy virgin feet."

IV

The eternal gates' terrific porter lifted the northern bar;
Thel entered in, and saw the secrets of the land unknown.
She saw the couches of the dead, and where the fibrous root
Of every heart on earth infixes deep its restless twists;
A land of sorrows and of tears, where never smile was seen.
She wandered in the land of clouds, through valleys dark, listening
Dolours and lamentations, wailing oft beside a dewy grave.
She stood in silence, listening to the voices of the ground,
Till to her own grave-plot she came, and there she sat down,
And heard this voice of sorrow breathed from the hollow pit:
"Why cannot the ear be closed to its own destruction?
Or the glistening eye to the poison of a smile?
Why are eyelids stored with arrows ready drawn,
Where a thousand fighting-men in ambush lie,
Or an eye of gifts and graces showering fruits and coinèd gold?
Why a tongue impressed with honey from every wind?
Why an ear, a whirlpool fierce to draw creations in?
Why a nostril wide-inhaling terror, trembling, and affright? . . .
The virgin started from her seat, and with a shriek
Fled back unhindered till she came into the vales of Har.

1789.

THE DEFILED SANCTUARY

I saw a chapel all of gold,
That none did dare to enter in;
And many, weeping, stood without,
Weeping, mourning, worshipping.

I saw a serpent rise between
The white pillars of the door,
And he forced and forced and forced,
Down the golden hinges tore;

And along the pavement sweet,
Set with pearls and rubies bright,
All his shining length he drew,
Till upon the altar white

Vomiting his poison out
On the bread and on the wine.
So I turned into a sty,
And laid me down among the swine.

About 1793. 1863.

THE TIGER

Tiger! tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder and what art
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? What dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He Who made the lamb make thee?

Tiger! tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

1794.

THE GARDEN OF LOVE

I went to the Garden of Love,
And saw what I never had seen:
A chapel was built in the midst,
Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this chapel were shut,
And "Thou shalt not" writ over the door;
So I turned to the Garden of Love,
That so many sweet flowers bore:

And I saw it was fillèd with graves,
And tombstones where flowers should be;
And priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,
And binding with briars my joys and desires.

1794.

THE MENTAL TRAVELLER

I travelled through a land of men,
A land of men and women too,
And heard and saw such dreadful things
As cold earth-wanderers never knew.

For there the babe is born in joy
That was begotten in dire woe;
Just as we reap in joy the fruit
Which we in bitter tears did sow.

And if the babe is born a boy,
He's given to a woman old,
Who nails him down upon a rock,
Catches his shrieks in cups of gold.

She binds iron thorns around his head;
She pierces both his hands and feet;
She cuts his heart out at his side,
To make it feel both cold and heat.

Her fingers number every nerve,
Just as a miser counts his gold;
She lives upon his shrieks and cries,
And she grows young as he grows old:

Till he becomes a bleeding youth,
And she becomes a virgin bright;
Then he rends up his manacles,
And binds her down for his delight.

He plants himself in all her nerves
Just as a husbandman his mould,
And she becomes his dwelling-place
And garden fruitful seventy-fold.

An agèd shadow soon he fades,
Wand'ring round an earthly cot,
Full-fillèd all with gems and gold
Which he by industry had got.

And these are the gems of the human soul,
The rubies and pearls of a love-sick eye,
The countless gold of the aching heart,
The martyr's groan and the lover's sigh.

They are his meat, they are his drink;
He feeds the beggar and the poor
And the wayfaring traveller:
Forever open is his door.

His grief is their eternal joy;
They make the roofs and walls to ring;
Till from the fire on the hearth
A little female babe does spring.

And she is all of solid fire
And gems and gold, that none his hand
Dares stretch to touch her baby form
Or wrap her in his swaddling-band.

But she comes to the man she loves,
If young or old, or rich or poor;
They soon drive out the agèd host,
A beggar at another's door.

He wanders weeping far away,
Until some other take him in;
Oft blind and age-bent, sore distrest,
Until he can a maiden win.

And, to allay his freezing age,
The poor man takes her in his arms;
The cottage fades before his sight,
The garden and its lovely charms.

The guests are scattered through the land;
For the eye altering alters all;
The senses roll themselves in fear,
And the flat earth becomes a ball.

The stars, sun, moon, all shrink away,
A desert vast without a bound,
And nothing left to eat or drink,
And a dark desert all around.

The honey of her infant lips,
The bread and wine of her sweet smile,
The wild game of her roving eye,
Does him to infancy beguile;

For as he eats and drinks he grows
Younger and younger every day,
And on the desert wild they both
Wander in terror and dismay.

Like the wild stag she flees away;
Her fear plants many a thicket wild;
While he pursues her night and day,
By various arts of love beguiled;

By various arts of love and hate,
Till the wide desert planted o'er
With labyrinths of wayward love,
Where roam the lion, wolf, and boar;

Till he becomes a wayward babe,
And she a weeping woman old.
Then many a lover wanders here;
The sun and stars are nearer rolled;

The trees bring forth sweet ecstasy
To all who in the desert roam;
Till many a city there is built,
And many a pleasant shepherd's home.

But when they find the frowning babe,
Terror strikes through the region wide:
They cry, "The babe! the babe is born!"
And flee away on every side.

For who dare touch the frowning form,
His arm is withered to its root;
Lions, boars, wolves, all howling flee,
And every tree does shed its fruit.

And none can touch that frowning form
Except it be a woman old;
She nails him down upon the rock,
And all is done as I have told.

About 1801–3. 1863.

AUGURIES OF INNOCENCE

To see a world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower;
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour.

A robin redbreast in a cage
Puts all heaven in a rage;
A dove-house filled with doves and pigeons
Shudders hell through all its regions.
A dog starved at his master's gate
Predicts the ruin of the state.
A horse misused upon the road
Calls to heaven for human blood.
Each outcry of the hunted hare
A fibre from the brain does tear.
A skylark wounded in the wing,
A cherubim does cease to sing.
The game-cock clipt and armed for fight
Does the rising sun affright.
Every wolf's and lion's howl
Raises from hell a human soul.
The wild deer, wand'ring here and there,
Keeps the human soul from care.

The lamb misused breeds public strife,
And yet forgives the butcher's knife.
The bat that flits at close of eve
Has left the brain that won't believe.
The owl that calls upon the night
Speaks the unbeliever's fright.
He who shall hurt the little wren
Shall never be beloved by men.
He who the ox to wrath has moved
Shall never be by woman loved.
The wanton boy that kills the fly
Shall feel the spider's enmity.
He who torments the chafer's sprite
Weaves a bower in endless night.
The caterpillar on the leaf
Repeats to thee thy mother's grief.
Kill not the moth nor butterfly,
For the Last Judgment draweth nigh.
He who shall train the horse to war
Shall never pass the polar bar.
The beggar's dog and widow's cat,
Feed them and thou wilt grow fat.
The gnat that sings his summer's song
Poison gets from Slander's tongue.
The poison of the snake and newt
Is the sweat of Envy's foot.
The poison of the honey-bee
Is the artist's jealousy.
The prince's robes and beggar's rags
Are toadstools on the miser's bags.
A truth that's told with bad intent
Beats all the lies you can invent.
It is right it should be so;
Man was made for joy and woe;
And when this we rightly know,
Through the world we safely go.
Joy and woe are woven fine,
A clothing for the soul divine.
Under every grief and pine
Runs a joy with silken twine.
The babe is more than swaddling bands;

Throughout all these human lands
Tools were made, and born were hands,
Every farmer understands.
Every tear from every eye
Becomes a babe in eternity;
This is caught by females bright,
And returned to its own delight.
The bleat, the bark, bellow, and roar
Are waves that beat on heaven's shore.
The babe that weeps the rod beneath
Writes revenge in realms of death.
The beggar's rags, fluttering in air,
Does to rags the heavens tear.
The soldier, armed with sword and gun,
Palsied strikes the summer's sun.
The poor man's farthing is worth more
Than all the gold on Afric's shore.
One mite wrung from the lab'rer's hands
Shall buy and sell the miser's lands;
Or, if protected from on high,
Does that whole nation sell and buy.
He who mocks the infant's faith
Shall be mocked in age and death.
He who shall teach the child to doubt
The rotting grave shall ne'er get out.
He who respects the infant's faith
Triumphs over hell and death.
The child's toys and the old man's reasons
Are the fruits of the two seasons.
The questioner, who sits so sly,
Shall never know how to reply.
He who replies to words of doubt
Doth put the light of knowledge out.
The strongest poison ever known
Came from Caesar's laurel crown.
Naught can deform the human race
Like to the armour's iron brace.
When gold and gems adorn the plow,
To peaceful arts shall Envy bow.
A riddle or the cricket's cry
Is to doubt a fit reply.

The emmet's inch and eagle's mile
Make lame Philosophy to smile.
He who doubts from what he sees
Will ne'er believe, do what you please.
If the sun and moon should doubt,
They'd immediately go out.
To be in a passion you good may do,
But no good if a passion is in you. . . . .
The winner's shout, the loser's curse,
Dance before dead England's hearse.
Every night and every morn
Some to misery are born.
Every morn and every night
Some are born to sweet delight.
Some are born to sweet delight,
Some are born to endless night.
We are led to believe a lie
When we see not through the eye,
Which was born in a night to perish in a night,
When the soul slept in beams of light.
God appears, and God is light,
To those poor souls who dwell in night;
But does a human form display
To those who dwell in realms of day.

About 1801–3. 1863.

FROM

MILTON

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here,
Among these dark Satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

1804.

TO THE QUEEN

The door of Death is made of gold,
That mortal eyes cannot behold;
But when the mortal eyes are closed,
And cold and pale the limbs reposed,
The soul awakes, and, wond'ring, sees
In her mild hand the golden keys.
The grave is heaven's golden gate,
And rich and poor around it wait:
O Shepherdess of England's fold,
Behold this gate of pearl and gold!

To dedicate to England's Queen
The visions that my soul has seen,
And by her kind permission bring
What I have borne on solemn wing
From the vast regions of the grave,
Before her throne my wings I wave;
Bowing before my sov'reign's feet,
"The grave produced these blossoms sweet,
In mild repose from earthly strife,
The blossoms of eternal life."

About 1806–7. 1808.

FROM

THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL

The vision of Christ that thou dost see
Is my vision's greatest enemy. . . . .
Thine is the friend of all mankind;
Mine speaks in parables to the blind.
Thine loves the same world that mine hates;
Thy heaven-doors are my hell-gates.
Socrates taught what Meletus
Loathed as a nation's bitterest curse;
And Caiaphas was, in his own mind,

A benefactor to mankind.
Both read the Bible day and night,
But thou read'st black where I read white.
. . . . . .
Was Jesus humble? or did he
Give any proofs of humility?
Boast of high things with humble tone,
And give with charity a stone?
When but a child he ran away,
And left his parents in dismay.
When they had wandered three days long,
These were the words upon his tongue:
"No earthly parents I confess;
I am doing my Father's business."
When the rich learnèd Pharisee
Came to consult him secretly,
Upon his heart with iron pen
He wrote, "Ye must be born again."
He was too proud to take a bribe;
He spoke with authority, not like a scribe.
He says with most consummate art,
"Follow me; I am meek and lowly of heart,
As that is the only way to escape
The miser's net and the glutton's trap." . . . .
He who loves his enemies betrays his friends:
This surely is not what Jesus intends,
But the sneaking pride of heroic schools,
And the scribes' and Pharisees' virtuous rules;
For he acts with honest triumphant pride,
And this is the cause that Jesus died.
He did not die with Christian ease,
Asking pardon of his enemies;
If he had, Caiaphas would forgive—
Sneaking submission can always live.
He had only to say that God was the Devil,
And the Devil was God, like a Christian civil,
Mild Christian regrets to the Devil confess
For affronting him thrice in the wilderness,
He had soon been bloody Caesar's elf,
And at last he would have been Caesar himself.
. . . . . .

Jesus was sitting in Moses' chair;
They brought the trembling woman there.
Moses commands she be stoned to death:
What was the sound of Jesus' breath?
He laid his hand on Moses' law;
The ancient heavens, in silent awe,
Writ with curses from pole to pole,
All away began to roll.
The Earth trembling and naked lay
In secret bed of mortal clay;
On Sinai felt the hand divine
Putting back the bloody shrine;
And she heard the breath of God,
As she heard by Eden's flood:
"Good and evil are no more!
Sinai's trumpets, cease to roar!
Cease, finger of God, to write!
The heavens are not clean in Thy sight.
Thou art good, and Thou alone,
Nor may the sinner cast one stone.
To be good only is to be
A god or else a Pharisee."

About 1810. 1863, 1868, 1874.

GEORGE CRABBE

FROM

THE VILLAGE

The village life, and ev'ry care that reigns
O'er youthful peasants and declining swains,
What labour yields, and what, that labour past,
Age, in its hour of languor, finds at last,
What form the real picture of the poor,
Demand a song—the Muse can give no more.
Fled are those times when, in harmonious strains,
The rustic poet praised his native plains;
No shepherds now, in smooth alternate verse,
Their country's beauty or their nymphs' rehearse:

Yet still for these we frame the tender strain;
Still in our lays fond Corydons complain,
And shepherds' boys their amorous pains reveal—
The only pains, alas, they never feel.
On Mincio's banks, in Cæsar's bounteous reign,
If Tityrus found the Golden Age again,
Must sleepy bards the flattering dream prolong,
Mechanic echoes of the Mantuan song?
From Truth and Nature shall we widely stray,
Where Virgil, not where Fancy, leads the way?
Yes, thus the Muses sing of happy swains,
Because the Muses never knew their pains.
They boast their peasants' pipes; but peasants now
Resign their pipes and plod behind the plough,
And few amid the rural tribe have time
To number syllables and play with rhyme:
Save honest Duck, what son of verse could share
The poet's rapture and the peasant's care,
Or the great labours of the field degrade
With the new peril of a poorer trade?
From this chief cause these idle praises spring—
That themes so easy few forbear to sing,
For no deep thought the trifling subjects ask;
To sing of shepherds is an easy task:
The happy youth assumes the common strain,
A nymph his mistress, and himself a swain;
With no sad scenes he clouds his tuneful prayer,
But all, to look like her, is painted fair.
I grant indeed that fields and flocks have charms
For him that grazes or for him that farms;
But when amid such pleasing scenes I trace
The poor laborious natives of the place,
And see the mid-day sun with fervid ray
On their bare heads and dewy temples play,
While some, with feebler heads and fainter hearts
Deplore their fortune yet sustain their parts,
Then shall I dare these real ills to hide
In tinsel trappings of poetic pride?
No: cast by Fortune on a frowning coast,
Which neither groves nor happy valleys boast,
Where other cares than those the Muse relates,

And other shepherds dwell with other mates,
By such examples taught I paint the cot
As Truth will paint it and as bards will not.
Nor you, ye poor, of lettered scorn complain:
To you the smoothest song is smooth in vain;
O'ercome by labour and bowed down by time,
Feel you the barren flattery of a rhyme?
Can poets soothe you, when you pine for bread,
By winding myrtles round your ruined shed?
Can their light tales your weighty griefs o'erpower,
Or glad with airy mirth the toilsome hour?

1780?–83. 1783.

FROM

THE BOROUGH

THE SEA

Turn to the watery world! But who to thee
(A wonder yet unviewed) shall paint—the sea?
Various and vast, sublime in all its forms,
When lulled by zephyrs or when roused by storms;
Its colours changing when from clouds and sun
Shades after shades upon the surface run;
Embrowned and horrid now, and now serene
In limpid blue and evanescent green;
And oft the foggy banks on ocean lie,
Lift the far sail, and cheat th' experienced eye.
Be it the summer noon: a sandy space
The ebbing tide has left upon its place;
Then, just the hot and stony beach above,
Light twinkling streams in bright confusion move
(For, heated thus, the warmer air ascends,
And with the cooler in its fall contends);
Then the broad bosom of the ocean keeps
An equal motion, swelling as it sleeps,
Then slowly sinking, curling to the strand,
Faint, lazy waves o'ercreep the ridgy sand,
Or tap the tarry boat with gentle blow,
And back return in silence, smooth and slow;
Ships in the calm seem anchored, for they glide
On the still sea, urged solely by the tide.

Art thou not present, this calm scene before,
Where all beside is pebbly length of shore,
And far as eye can reach it can discern no more?
Yet sometimes comes a ruffling cloud to make
The quiet surface of the ocean shake,
As an awakened giant with a frown
Might show his wrath and then to sleep sink down.
View now the winter storm! Above, one cloud,
Black and unbroken, all the skies o'ershroud;
Th' unwieldy porpoise through the day before
Had rolled in view of boding men on shore,
And sometimes hid and sometimes showed his form,
Dark as the cloud and furious as the storm.
All where the eye delights yet dreads to roam,
The breaking billows cast the flying foam
Upon the billows rising; all the deep
Is restless change, the waves so swelled and steep
Breaking and sinking, and the sunken swells,
Nor one, one moment, in its station dwells.
But nearer land you may the billows trace,
As if contending in their watery chase,
May watch the mightiest till the shoal they reach,
Then break and hurry to their utmost stretch;
Curled as they come, they strike with furious force,
And then, re-flowing, take their grating course,
Raking the rounded flints, which ages past
Rolled by their rage, and shall to ages last.
Far off the petrel in the troubled way
Swims with her brood or flutters in the spray;
She rises often, often drops again,
And sports at ease on the tempestuous main.
High o'er the restless deep, above the reach
Of gunner's hope, vast flights of wild ducks stretch;
Far as the eye can glance on either side,
In a broad space and level line they glide;
All in their wedge-like figures from the north,
Day after day, flight after flight, go forth.
Inshore their passage tribes of sea-gulls urge,
And drop for prey within the sweeping surge;
Oft in the rough opposing blast they fly
Far back, then turn and all their force apply,

While to the storm they give their weak complaining cry;
Or clap the sleek white pinion to the breast,
And in the restless ocean dip for rest.
Darkness begins to reign. The louder wind
Appals the weak and awes the firmer mind;
But frights not him whom evening and the spray
In part conceal—yon prowler on his way:
Lo! he has something seen; he runs apace,
As if he feared companion in the chase;
He sees his prize, and now he turns again,
Slowly and sorrowing. "Was your search in vain?"
Gruffly he answers, "'T is a sorry sight!
A seaman's body: there 'll be more to-night!"
Hark to those sounds! they 're from distress at sea.
How quick they come! What terrors may there be!
Yes, 't is a driven vessel: I discern
Lights, signs of terror, gleaming from the stern.
Others behold them too, and from the town
In various parties seamen hurry down.
Their wives pursue and damsels, urged by dread
Lest men so dear be into danger led:
Their head the gown has hooded, and their call
In this sad night is piercing like the squall;
They feel their kinds of power, and, when they meet,
Chide, fondle, weep, dare, threaten, or intreat.
See! one poor girl, all terror and alarm,
Has fondly seized upon her lover's arm:
"Thou shalt not venture!" and he answers, "No,
I will not"—still she cries, "Thou shalt not go!"
No need of this: not here the stoutest boat
Can through such breakers, o'er such billows float;
Yet may they view these lights upon the beach,
Which yield them hope whom help can never reach.
From parted clouds the moon her radiance throws
On the wild waves, and all the danger shows;
But shows them beaming in her shining vest,
Terrific splendour! gloom in glory drest!
This for a moment; and then clouds again
Hide every beam, and fear and darkness reign.
But hear we now those sounds? Do lights appear?
I see them not! the storm alone I hear!

And, lo, the sailors homeward take their way:
Man must endure—let us submit and pray.

1801?–9. 1810.

PETER GRIMES

Old Peter Grimes made fishing his employ;
His wife he cabined with him and his boy,
And seemed that life laborious to enjoy.
To town came quiet Peter with his fish,
And had of all a civil word and wish.
He left his trade upon the Sabbath day,
And took young Peter in his hand to pray:
But soon the stubborn boy from care broke loose,
At first refused, then added his abuse;
His father's love he scorned, his power defied,
But, being drunk, wept sorely when he died.

Yes, then he wept, and to his mind there came
Much of his conduct, and he felt the shame:—
How he had oft the good old man reviled,
And never paid the duty of a child;
How, when the father in his Bible read,
He in contempt and anger left the shed:
"It is the word of life," the parent cried;
"This is the life itself," the boy replied,
And, while old Peter in amazement stood,
Gave the hot spirit to his boiling blood:—
How he, with oath and furious speech, began
To prove his freedom and assert the man;
And when the parent checked his impious rage,
How he had cursed the tyranny of age—
Nay, once had dealt the sacrilegious blow
On his bare head and laid his parent low;
The father groaned; "If thou art old," said he,
"And hast a son—thou wilt remember me;
Thy mother left me in an happy time,
Thou kill'dst not her—Heav'n spares the double crime."
On an inn-settle, in his maudlin grief,
This he revolved, and drank for his relief.

Now lived the youth in freedom, but debarred
From constant pleasure, and he thought it hard;

Hard that he could not every wish obey,
But must awhile relinquish ale and play;
Hard that he could not to his cards attend,
But must acquire the money he would spend.
With greedy eye he looked on all he saw;
He knew not justice, and he laughed at law:
On all he marked he stretched his ready hand;
He fished by water, and he filched by land.
Oft in the night has Peter dropped his oar,
Fled from his boat, and sought for prey on shore;
Oft up the hedge-row glided, on his back
Bearing the orchard's produce in a sack,
Or farm-yard load, tugged fiercely from the stack;
And as these wrongs to greater numbers rose,
The more he looked on all men as his foes.

He built a mud-walled hovel, where he kept
His various wealth, and there he oft-times slept.
But no success could please his cruel soul:
He wished for one to trouble and control;
He wanted some obedient boy to stand
And bear the blow of his outrageous hand,
And hoped to find in some propitious hour
A feeling creature subject to his power.

Peter had heard there were in London then—
Still have they being!—workhouse-clearing men,
Who, undisturbed by feelings just or kind,
Would parish-boys to needy tradesmen bind;
They in their want a trifling sum would take,
And toiling slaves of piteous orphans make.
Such Peter sought; and when a lad was found,
The sum was dealt him, and the slave was bound.
Some few in town observed in Peter's trap
A boy, with jacket blue and woollen cap:
But none enquired how Peter used the rope,
Or what the bruise that made the stripling stoop;
None could the ridges on his back behold,
None sought him shiv'ring in the winter's cold;
None put the question, "Peter, dost thou give
The boy his food? What, man, the lad must live!
Consider, Peter: let the child have bread;
He 'll serve thee better if he 's stroked and fed."

None reasoned thus; and some, on hearing cries,
Said calmly, "Grimes is at his exercise."
Pined, beaten, cold, pinched, threatened, and abused,
His efforts punished and his food refused,
Awake tormented, soon aroused from sleep,
Struck if he wept and yet compelled to weep,
The trembling boy dropped down and strove to pray,
Received a blow, and trembling turned away,
Or sobbed and hid his piteous face, while he,
The savage master, grinned in horrid glee:
He'd now the power he ever loved to show,
A feeling being subject to his blow.
Thus lived the lad, in hunger, peril, pain,
His tears despised, his supplications vain;
Compelled by fear to lie, by need to steal,
His bed uneasy, and unblest his meal,
For three sad years the boy his tortures bore,
And then his pains and trials were no more.
"How died he, Peter?" when the people said,
He growled, "I found him lifeless in his bed,"
Then tried for softer tone, and sighed, "Poor Sam is dead."
Yet murmurs were there, and some questions asked—
How he was fed, how punished, and how tasked?
Much they suspected, but they little proved,
And Peter passed untroubled and unmoved.
Another boy with equal ease was found,
The money granted, and the victim bound.
And what his fate? One night it chanced he fell
From the boat's mast and perished in her well,
Where fish were living kept and where the boy
(So reasoned men) could not himself destroy.
"Yes! so it was," said Peter; "in his play
(For he was idle both by night and day)
He climbed the main-mast and then fell below;"
Then showed his corpse, and pointed to the blow.
"What said the jury?" They were long in doubt,
But sturdy Peter faced the matter out;
So they dismissed him, saying at the time,
"Keep fast your hatchway when you've boys who climb."
This hit the conscience, and he coloured more

Than for the closest questions put before.
Thus all his fears the verdict set aside,
And at the slave-shop Peter still applied.
Then came a boy of manners soft and mild.
Our seamen's wives with grief beheld the child:
All thought (the poor themselves) that he was one
Of gentle blood, some noble sinner's son,
Who had, belike, deceived some humble maid,
Whom he had first seduced and then betrayed.
However this, he seemed a gracious lad,
In grief submissive and with patience sad.
Passive he laboured, till his slender frame
Bent with his loads, and he at length was lame.
Strange that a frame so weak could bear so long
The grossest insult and the foulest wrong;
But there were causes: in the town they gave
Fire, food, and comfort to the gentle slave;
And though stern Peter, with a cruel hand
And knotted rope, enforced the rude command,
Yet he considered what he'd lately felt,
And his vile blows with selfish pity dealt.
One day such draughts the cruel fisher made
He could not vend them in his borough-trade,
But sailed for London-mart. The boy was ill,
But ever humbled to his master's will;
And on the river, where they smoothly sailed,
He strove with terror and awhile prevailed;
But, new to danger on the angry sea,
He clung affrightened to his master's knee.
The boat grew leaky, and the wind was strong,
Rough was the passage, and the time was long;
His liquor failed, and Peter's wrath arose—
No more is known: the rest we must suppose,
Or learn of Peter. Peter, says he, "spied
The stripling's danger, and for harbour tried;
Meantime the fish, and then th' apprentice died."
The pitying women raised a clamour round,
And weeping said, "Thou hast thy 'prentice drowned."
Now the stern man was summoned to the hall,
To tell his tale before the burghers all;
He gave th' account, professed the lad he loved,

And kept his brazen features all unmoved.
The mayor himself with tone severe replied,
"Henceforth with thee shall never boy abide;
Hire thee a freeman, whom thou durst not beat,
But who, in thy despite, will sleep and eat.
Free thou art now!—again shouldst thou appear,
Thou 'lt find thy sentence, like thy soul, severe."
Alas for Peter, not an helping hand,
So was he hated, could he now command:
Alone he rowed his boat, alone he cast
His nets beside, or made his anchor fast;
To hold a rope or hear a curse was none;
He toiled and railed, he groaned and swore, alone.
Thus by himself compelled to live each day,
To wait for certain hours the tide's delay,
At the same times the same dull views to see:
The bounding marsh-bank and the blighted tree;
The water only, when the tides were high,
When low, the mud half-covered and half-dry;
The sunburned tar that blisters on the planks,
And bankside stakes in their uneven ranks;
Heaps of entangled weeds that slowly float,
As the tide rolls by the impeded boat.
When tides were neap, and in the sultry day
Through the tall bounding mud-banks made their way,
Which on each side rose swelling, and below
The dark warm flood ran silently and slow,
There anchoring, Peter chose from man to hide,
There hang his head, and view the lazy tide
In its hot slimy channel slowly glide,
Where the small eels, that left the deeper way
For the warm shore, within the shallows play,
Where gaping mussels, left upon the mud,
Slope their slow passage to the fallen flood.
Here, dull and hopeless, he 'd lie down and trace
How sidelong crabs had scrawled their crooked race,
Or sadly listen to the tuneless cry
Of fishing gull or clanging golden-eye,
What time the sea-birds to the marsh would come,
And the loud bittern, from the bull-rush home,
Gave from the salt-ditch side the bellowing boom.

He nursed the feelings these dull scenes produce,
And loved to stop beside the opening sluice,
Where the small stream, confined in narrow bound,
Ran with a dull, unvaried, sadd'ning sound,
Where all presented to the eye or ear
Oppressed the soul with misery, grief, and fear.

Besides these objects, there were places three
Which Peter seemed with certain dread to see;
When he drew near them, he would turn from each,
And loudly whistle till he passed the reach.

A change of scene to him brought no relief:
In town, 't was plain, men took him for a thief;
The sailors' wives would stop him in the street,
And say, "Now, Peter, thou 'st no boy to beat";
Infants at play, when they perceived him, ran,
Warning each other—"That 's the wicked man!"
He growled an oath, and in an angry tone
Cursed the whole place, and wished to be alone.

Alone he was, the same dull scenes in view;
And still more gloomy in his sight they grew:
Though man he hated, yet, employed alone
At bootless labour, he would swear and groan,
Cursing the shoals that glided by the spot,
And gulls that caught them when his arts could not.
Cold, nervous tremblings shook his sturdy frame,
And strange disease—he couldn't say the name.
Wild were his dreams, and oft he rose in fright,
Waked by his view of horrors in the night—
Horrors that would the sternest minds amaze,
Horrors that demons might be proud to raise;
And though he felt forsaken, grieved at heart
To think he lived from all mankind apart,
Yet, if a man approached, in terrors he would start.

A winter passed since Peter saw the town,
And summer lodgers were again come down.
These, idly curious, with their glasses spied
The ships in bay as anchored for the tide,
The river's craft, the bustle of the quay,
And seaport views, which landmen love to see.
One up the river had a man and boat
Seen day by day, now anchored, now afloat;

Fisher he seemed, yet used no net nor hook;
Of sea-fowl swimming by no heed he took,
But on the gliding waves still fixed his lazy look;
At certain stations he would view the stream
As if he stood bewildered in a dream,
Or that some power had chained him for a time,
To feel a curse or meditate on crime.
This known, some curious, some in pity went,
And others questioned, "Wretch, dost thou repent?"
He heard, he trembled, and in fear resigned
His boat: new terror filled his restless mind;
Furious he grew and up the country ran,
And there they seized him—a distempered man.
Him we received; and to a parish-bed,
Followed and cursed, the groaning man was led.
Here when they saw him whom they used to shun,
A lost, lone man, so harassed and undone,
Our gentle females, ever prompt to feel,
Perceived compassion on their anger steal;
His crimes they could n't from their memories blot,
But they were grieved, and trembled at his lot.
A priest too came, to whom his words are told,
And all the signs they shuddered to behold:
"Look! look!" they cried; "his limbs with horror shake!
And as he grinds his teeth, what noise they make!
How glare his angry eyes, and yet he 's not awake!
See! what cold drops upon his forehead stand,
And how he clenches that broad bony hand!"
The priest attending, found he spoke at times
As one alluding to his fears and crimes.
"It was the fall," he muttered; "I can show
The manner how—I never struck a blow":
And then aloud, "Unhand me, free my chain!
On oath, he fell—it struck him to the brain!—
Why ask my father? that old man will swear
Against my life; besides, he was n't there!
What, all agreed? Am I to die to-day?
My Lord, in mercy give me time to pray!"
Then, as they watched him, calmer he became,
And grew so weak he could n't move his frame,
But murmuring spake, while they could see and hear

The start of terror and the groan of fear,
See the large dew-beads on his forehead rise,
And the cold death-drop glaze his sunken eyes.
Nor yet he died, but with unwonted force
Seemed with some fancied being to discourse:
He knew not us, or with accustomed art
He hid the knowledge, yet exposed his heart;
'T was part confession and the rest defence,
A madman's tale with gleams of waking sense.
"I 'll tell you all," he said, "the very day
When the old man first placed them in my way—
My father's spirit, he who always tried
To give me trouble when he lived and died;
When he was gone he could not be content
To see my days in painful labour spent,
But would appoint his meetings, and he made
Me watch at these and so neglect my trade.
"'T was one hot noon, all silent, still, serene;
No living being had I lately seen;
I paddled up and down, and dipped my net,
But (such his pleasure) I could nothing get—
A father's pleasure, when his toil was done,
To plague and torture thus an only son!
And so I sat and looked upon the stream,
How it ran on, and felt as in a dream.
But dream it was not: no! I fixed my eyes
On the mid stream, and saw the spirits rise;
I saw my father on the water stand,
And hold a thin pale boy in either hand;
And there they glided ghastly on the top
Of the salt flood, and never touched a drop;
I would have struck them, but they knew th' intent,
And smiled upon the oar, and down they went.
"Now, from that day, whenever I began
To dip my net, there stood the hard old man—
He and those boys. I humbled me, and prayed
They would be gone: they heeded not, but stayed;
Nor could I turn, nor would the boat go by,
But, gazing on the spirits, there was I;
They bade me leap to death, but I was loth to die.
And every day, as sure as day arose,

Would these three spirits meet me ere the close;
To hear and mark them daily was my doom,
And 'Come,' they said, with weak, sad voices, 'come':
To row away, with all my strength I tried,
But there were they, hard by me in the tide,
The three unbodied forms; and 'Come,' still 'come,' they cried.
Fathers should pity—but this old man shook
His hoary locks, and froze me by a look.
Thrice, when I struck them, through the water came
A hollow groan, that weakened all my frame.
'Father!' said I, 'have mercy!' He replied—
I know not what—the angry spirit lied—
'Didst thou not draw thy knife?' said he: 't was true,
But I had pity and my arm withdrew;
He cried for mercy, which I kindly gave,
But he has no compassion in his grave.
"There were three places where they ever rose—
The whole long river has not such as those—
Places accurst, where if a man remain,
He 'll see the things which strike him to the brain:
And there they made me on my paddle lean,
And look at them for hours—accursèd scene!
When they would glide to that smooth eddy-space,
Then bid me leap and join them in the place;
And at my groans each little villain sprite
Enjoyed my pains and vanished in delight.
"In one fierce summer day, when my poor brain
Was burning-hot, and cruel was my pain,
Then came this father-foe, and there he stood
With his two boys again upon the flood;
There was more mischief in their eyes, more glee
In their pale faces, when they glared at me.
Still did they force me on the oar to rest;
And when they saw me fainting and oppressed,
He, with his hand, the old man, scooped the flood,
And there came flame about him mixed with blood;
He bade me stoop and look upon the place,
Then flung the hot-red liquor in my face;
Burning it blazed, and then I roared for pain—
I thought the demons would have turned my brain.

Still there they stood, and forced me to behold
A place of horrors—they can not be told—
Where the flood opened, there I heard the shriek
Of tortured guilt—no earthly tongue can speak:
'All days alike! forever!' did they say,
'And unremitted torments every day!'—
Yes, so they said." But here he ceased, and gazed
On all around, affrightened and amazed;
And still he tried to speak, and looked in dread
Of frightened females gathering round his bed;
Then dropped exhausted, and appeared at rest
Till the strong foe the vital powers possessed;
Then with an inward, broken voice he cried,
"Again they come!" and muttered as he died.

1801?–9. 1810.

FROM

TALES OF THE HALL

THE PRECEPTOR HUSBAND

"Whom passed we musing near the woodman's shed,
Whose horse not only carried him but led,
That his grave rider might have slept the time,
Or solved a problem, or composed a rhyme?
A more abstracted man within my view
Has never come—he recollected you."
Yes, he was thoughtful—thinks the whole day long,
Deeply, and chiefly that he once thought wrong:
He thought a strong and kindred mind to trace
In the soft outlines of a trifler's face.
Poor Finch! I knew him when at school, a boy
Who might be said his labours to enjoy;
So young a pedant that he always took
The girl to dance who most admired her book,
And would the butler and the cook surprise,
Who listened to his Latin exercise.
The matron's self the praise of Finch avowed,
He was so serious and he read so loud.
But yet, with all this folly and conceit,
The lines he wrote were elegant and neat;
And early promise in his mind appeared

Of noble efforts when by reason cleared.
And when he spoke of wives, the boy would say
His should be skilled in Greek and algebra,
For who would talk with one to whom his themes
And favourite studies were no more than dreams?
For this, though courteous, gentle, and humane,
The boys contemned and hated him as vain,
Stiff, and pedantic.
"Did the man enjoy,
In after life, the visions of the boy?"
At least they formed his wishes; they were yet
The favourite views, on which his mind was set:
He quaintly said how happy must they prove
Who, loving, study, or who, studious, love;
Who feel their minds with sciences imbued,
And their warm hearts by beauty's force subdued.
His widowed mother, who the world had seen,
And better judge of either sex had been,
Told him that, just as their affairs were placed,
In some respects he must forego his taste;
That every beauty, both of form and mind,
Must be by him, if unendowed, resigned;
That wealth was wanted for their joint affairs—
His sisters' portions and the Hall's repairs.
The son assented—and the wife must bring
Wealth, learning, beauty, ere he gave the ring;
But as these merits, when they all unite,
Are not produced in every soil and site,
And when produced are not the certain gain
Of him who would these precious things obtain,
Our patient student waited many a year,
Nor saw this phoenix in his walks appear.
But as views mended in the joint estate,
He would a something in his points abate:
Give him but learning, beauty, temper, sense,
And he would then the happy state commence.
The mother sighed, but she at last agreed;
And now the son was likely to succeed:
Wealth is substantial good the Fates allot—
We know we have it or we have it not;
But all those graces which men highly rate

Their minds themselves imagine and create,
And therefore Finch was in a way to find
A good that much depended on his mind.
He looked around, observing, till he saw
Augusta Dallas! when he felt an awe
Of so much beauty and commanding grace,
That well became the honours of her race:
This lady never boasted of the trash
That commerce brings; she never spoke of cash;
The gentle blood that ran in every vein
At all such notions blushed in pure disdain.
Wealth once relinquished, there was all beside,
As Finch believed, that could adorn a bride:
He could not gaze upon the form and air
Without concluding all was right and fair;
Her mild but dignified reserve suppressed
All free inquiry, but his mind could rest,
Assured that all was well, and in that view was blest.
And now he asked, "Am I the happy man
Who can deserve her? is there one who can?"
His mother told him he possessed the land
That puts a man in heart to ask a hand;
All who possess it feel they bear about
A spell that puts a speedy end to doubt.
But Finch was modest: "May it, then, be thought
That she can so be gained?" "She may be sought."
"Can love with land be won?" "By land is beauty bought.
Do not, dear Charles, with indignation glow,
All value that the want of which they know:
Nor do I blame her; none that worth denies.
But can my son be sure of what he buys?
Beauty she has; but with it can you find
The inquiring spirit or the studious mind?
This wilt thou need who art to thinking prone,
And minds unpaired had better think alone;
Then how unhappy will the husband be
Whose sole associate spoils his company?"
This he would try; but all such trials prove
Too mighty for a man disposed to love:
He whom the magic of a face enchains
But little knowledge of the mind obtains;

If by his tender heart the man is led,
He finds how erring is the soundest head.
The lady saw his purpose; she could meet
The man's inquiry, and his aim defeat.
She had a studied flattery in her look;
She could be seen retiring with a book;
She by attending to his speech could prove
That she for learning had a fervent love—
Yet love alone, she modestly declared;
She must be spared inquiry, and was spared:
Of her poor studies she was not so weak
As in his presence, or at all, to speak;
But to discourse with him, who, all agreed,
Has read so much, would be absurd indeed;
Ask what he might, she was so much a dunce
She would confess her ignorance at once.
All this the man believed not; doomed to grieve
For his belief, he this would not believe:
No! he was quite in raptures to discern
That love and that avidity to learn.
"Could she have found," she said, "a friend, a guide,
Like him, to study had been all her pride;
But, doomed so long to frivolous employ,
How could she those superior views enjoy?
The day might come, a happy day for her,
When she might choose the ways she should prefer."
Then too he learned, in accidental way,
How much she grieved to lose the given day
In dissipation wild, in visitation gay.
Happy, most happy, must the woman prove
Who proudly looks on him she vows to love;
Who can her humble acquisitions state,
That he will praise, at least will tolerate.
Still the cool mother sundry doubts expressed:
"How! is Augusta graver than the rest?
There are three others: they are not inclined
To feed with precious food the empty mind.
Whence this strong relish?" "It is very strong,"
Replied the son, "and has possessed her long,
Increased indeed, I may presume, by views—
We may suppose—ah! may she not refuse?"

"Fear not!—I see the question must be tried,
Nay, is determined—let us to your bride."
They soon were wedded, and the nymph appeared
By all her promised excellence endeared:
Her words were kind, were cautious, and were few,
And she was proud—of what her husband knew.
Weeks passed away, some five or six, before,
Blest in the present, Finch could think of more.
A month was next upon a journey spent,
When to the Lakes the fond companions went.
Then the gay town received them; and at last
Home to their mansion, man and wife, they passed.
And now in quiet way they came to live
On what their fortune, love, and hopes would give.
The honied moon had naught but silver rays,
And shone benignly on their early days;
The second moon a light less vivid shed;
And now the silver rays were tinged with lead.
They now began to look beyond the Hall,
And think what friends would make a morning call.
Their former appetites returned, and now
Both could their wishes and their tastes avow;
'T was now no longer, "Just what you approve,"
But "Let the wild fowl be to-day, my love."
In fact the senses, drawn aside by force
Of a strong passion, sought their usual course.
Now to her music would the wife repair,
To which he listened once with eager air,
When there was so much harmony within
That any note was sure its way to win;
But now the sweet, melodious tones were sent
From the struck chords, and none cared where they went.
Full well we know that many a favourite air,
That charms a party, fails to charm a pair:
And as Augusta played she looked around
To see if one was dying at the sound;
But all were gone—a husband, wrapt in gloom,
Stalked careless, listless, up and down the room.
And now 't is time to fill that ductile mind
With knowledge from his stores of various kind.
His mother, in a peevish mood, had asked,

"Does your Augusta profit? is she tasked?"
"Madam!" he cried, offended with her looks,
"There 's time for all things, and not all for books:
Just on one's marriage to sit down, and prate
On points of learning, is a thing I hate."
"'T is right, my son; and it appears to me
If deep your hatred, you must well agree."
Finch was too angry for a man so wise,
And said, "Insinuation I despise!
Nor do I wish to have a mind so full
Of learnèd trash—it makes a woman dull.
Let it suffice that I in her discern
An aptitude and a desire to learn."
The matron smiled; but she observed a frown
On her son's brow, and calmly sat her down,
Leaving the truth to Time, who solves our doubt
By bringing his all-glorious daughter out—
Truth, for whose beauty all their love profess,
And yet how many think it ugliness!
"Augusta, love," said Finch, "while you engage
In that embroidery, let me read a page:
Suppose it Hume's; indeed he takes a side,
But still an author need not be our guide;
And as he writes with elegance and ease,
Do now attend—he will be sure to please.
Here at the Revolution we commence—
We date, you know, our liberties from hence."
"Yes, sure," Augusta answered with a smile;
"Our teacher always talked about his style,
When we about the Revolution read,
And how the martyrs to the flames were led—
The good old bishops, I forget their names,
But they were all committed to the flames;
Maidens and widows, bachelors and wives—
The very babes and sucklings lost their lives.
I read it all in Guthrie at the school—
What, now! I know you took me for a fool.
There were five bishops taken from the stall,
And twenty widows—I remember all;
And by this token, that our teacher tried
To cry for pity, till she howled and cried."

"True, true, my love, but you mistake the thing:
The Revolution that made William king
Is what I mean; the Reformation you,
In Edward and Elizabeth."
"'T is true:
But the nice reading is the love between
The brave lord Essex and the cruel queen;
And how he sent the ring to save his head,
Which the false lady kept till he was dead.
That is all true: now read, and I 'll attend—
But was not she a most deceitful friend?
It was a monstrous, vile, and treacherous thing
To show no pity and to keep the ring;
But the queen shook her in her dying bed,
And 'God forgive you!' was the word she said,
'Not I, for certain!'—Come, I will attend;
So read the Revolutions to an end."
Finch, with a timid, strange, inquiring look,
Softly and slowly laid aside the book
With sigh inaudible. "Come, never heed,"
Said he, recovering; "now I cannot read."
They walked at leisure through their wood and groves,
In fields and lanes, and talked of plants and loves,
And loves of plants. Said Finch, "Augusta, dear,
You said you loved to learn: were you sincere?
Do you remember that you told me once
How much you grieved, and said you were a dunce?—
That is, you wanted information. Say,
What would you learn? I will direct your way."
"Goodness!" said she; "what meanings you discern
In a few words! I said I wished to learn,
And so I think I did; and you replied
The wish was good: what would you now beside?
Did not you say it showed an ardent mind?
And pray what more do you expect to find?"
"My dear Augusta, could you wish indeed
For any knowledge, and not then proceed?
That is not wishing—"
"Mercy! how you tease!
You knew I said it with a view to please;
A compliment to you, and quite enough.

You would not kill me with that puzzling stuff!
Sure I might say I wished, but that is still
Far from a promise; it is not 'I will.'
But come: to show you that I will not hide
My proper talents, you shall be my guide;
And Lady Boothby, when we meet, shall cry,
'She 's quite as good a botanist as I.'"
"Right, my Augusta." And in manner grave
Finch his first lecture on the science gave—
An introduction; and he said, "My dear,
Your thought was happy; let us persevere,
And let no trifling cause our work retard."
Agreed the lady, but she feared it hard.
Now o'er the grounds they rambled many a mile.
He showed the flowers, the stamina, the style,
Calix and corol, pericarp and fruit,
And all the plant produces, branch and root;
Of these he treated, every varying shape,
Till poor Augusta panted to escape.
He showed the various foliage plants produce,
Lunate and lyrate, runcinate, retuse;
Long were the learned words and urged with force—
"Panduriform," "pinnatifid," "premorse,"
"Latent" and "patent," "papulous" and "plane"—
"Oh!" said the pupil, "it will turn my brain."
"Fear not," he answered, and again, intent
To fill that mind, o'er class and order went;
And, stopping, "Now," said he, "my love, attend."
"I do," said she, "but when will be an end?"
"When we have made some progress. Now begin:
Which is the stigma? show me with the pin.
Come, I have told you, dearest,—let me see—
Times very many; tell it now to me."
"Stigma! I know—the things with yellow heads,
That shed the dust and grow upon the threads;
You call them wives and husbands, but you know
That is a joke—here, look, and I will show
All I remember." Doleful was the look
Of the preceptor when he shut his book
(The system brought to aid them in their view),
And now with sighs returned, "It will not do."

A handsome face first led him to suppose
There must be talent with such looks as those:
The want of talent taught him now to find
The face less handsome with so poor a mind;
And half the beauty faded when he found
His cherished hopes were falling to the ground.
Finch lost his spirit; but e'en then he sought
For fancied powers: she might in time be taught;
Sure there was nothing in that mind to fear;
The favourite study did not yet appear.

Once he expressed a doubt if she could look
For five succeeding minutes on a book;
When, with awakened spirit, she replied
He was mistaken and she would be tried.
With this delighted, he new hopes expressed:
"How do I know? She may abide the test.
Men have I known, and famous in their day,
Who were by chance directed in their way.
I have been hasty.—Well, Augusta, well,
What is your favourite reading? prithee tell.
Our different tastes may different books require;
Yours I may not peruse and yet admire.
Do then explain." "Good Heaven!" said she, in haste,
"How do I hate these lectures upon taste!"
"I lecture not, my love. But do declare—
You read, you say—what your attainments are."
"Oh, you believe," said she, "that other things
Are read as well as histories of kings,
And loves of plants, with all that simple stuff
About their sex, of which I know enough!
Well, if I must, I will my studies name:
Blame if you please—I know you love to blame.
When all our childish books were set apart,
The first I read was 'Wanderings of the Heart';
It was a story where was done a deed
So dreadful that alone I feared to read.
The next was 'The Confessions of a Nun'—
'T was quite a shame such evil should be done;
Nun of—no matter for the creature's name,
For there are girls no nunnery can tame.
Then was the story of the haunted hall,

Where the huge picture nodded from the wall
When the old lord looked up with trembling dread;
And I grew pale and shuddered, as I read.
Then came the tales of winters, summers, springs,
At Bath and Brighton—they were pretty things!
No ghosts nor spectres there were heard or seen,
But all was love and flight to Gretna Green.
Perhaps your greater learning may despise
What others like, and there your wisdom lies.
Well—do not frown—I read the tender tales
Of lonely cots, retreats in silent vales
For maids forsaken and suspected wives,
Against whose peace some foe his plot contrives;
With all the hidden schemes that none can clear
Till the last book, and then the ghosts appear.
I read all plays that on the boards succeed,
And all the works that ladies ever read—
Shakspeare and all the rest,—I did indeed!
Ay, you may stare; but, sir, believe it true
That we can read and learn, as well as you.
I would not boast—but I could act a scene
In any play, before I was fifteen.
Nor is this all, for many are the times
I read in Pope and Milton, prose and rhymes;
They were our lessons, and at ten years old
I could repeat—but now enough is told.
Sir, I can tell you I my mind applied
To all my studies, and was not denied
Praise for my progress.—Are you satisfied?"
"Entirely, madam! else were I possessed
By a strong spirit who could never rest.
Yes, yes, no more I question—here I close
The theme forever—let us to repose."

1817–18. 1819.

NOTES

NOTES

SAMUEL BUTLER

(1) HUDIBRAS. "Written in the Time of the Late Wars."—Title-page of the 1674 edition. Canto I. 1–14, 65–90, 119–26, 187–228. The title may have been taken from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, II. ii. st. 17, 37, where the knight Huddibras perhaps stands for the Puritans. *The Grub Street Journal*, in 1731, derived the name from Hugh de Bras, the patron saint of Devonshire, the home of Colonel Rolls, supposed by some to be the original of Hudibras; it is more probable, however, that the original was Sir Samuel Luke, of Bedfordshire, a rigid Presbyterian and a colonel in the Parliamentary army, with whom Butler lived for some time (see "Hudibras," I. 1. 905–8). ¶ 10. *long-eared:* a reference to the short hair of the "Roundheads," which made their ears more conspicuous, and doubtless also to the *genus asinus*. ¶ 13. *Sir Knight:* Hudibras. ¶ 30. *mood and figure:* in scholastic logic, syllogisms—or arguments by the use of a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion—were classified according to their mood and figure, or form.

(2) 42. *Tycho Brahe:* a great Danish astronomer (1546–1601). *Erra Pater:* a nickname (said to be derived from a Jewish astrologer), here applied probably to William Lilly (1602–81), a famous English astrologer. ¶ 51. *true blue:* "Genuine, lasting blue, blue being taken as a type of constancy; . . . . unwavering, stanch; . . . . specifically applied to the Scotch Presbyterians or Whig party in the seventeenth century, from the color (blue) adopted by the Covenanters in contradistinction to the royal red."—*The Century Dictionary*. ¶ 53. *errant*=wandering (Latin "errare," to go about, to wander); cf. "knight errant." ¶ 54. *the true Church Militant:* the Church Militant, in contrast to the Church Triumphant in heaven, is the church fighting against sin in this world; the next lines show that Butler is using "militant" in its literal sense and referring to the Presbyterians' part in the civil war.

(3) 73, 74. In opposition to the spirit of merry-making encouraged by the English Church, the Presbyterians fasted on Christmas and other festivals. ¶ 86. The Presbyterians and Puritans were accused of being secretly given to the creature comforts which they publicly denounced: "Sir John Birkenhead queries whether Mr. Peters did justly preach against Christmas pies the same day that he eat two minced pies for his dinner."—Grey's note.

CHARLES SACKVILLE, EARL OF DORSET

(4) SONG. Sub-heading, "Written at sea, in the first Dutch war (1665), the night before an engagement." ¶ 29. *Opdam:* the Dutch admiral. ¶ 32. *Goree:* a district on the Dutch coast.

(5) 38. *vapour*=boast. ¶ 44. *main:* a hand, or throw, at dice (Latin "manus," hand). ¶ 45. *ombre:* a game at cards; see Pope's "Rape of the Lock," III. 25 ff. (p. 97).

(6) ON A LADY WHO FANCIED HERSELF A BEAUTY. ¶ 7. *blackguard:* the term was used of vagrant city boys, who ran errands, carried torches to light passengers along the dark streets, etc. ¶ 8. *link*=torch.

JOHN WILMOT, EARL OF ROCHESTER

(10) A SONG. ¶ 6. *fantastic*=controlled by fantasy, capricious

JOHN OLDHAM

(10) TO THE MEMORY OF MR. CHARLES MORWENT. Stanza 21.

(11) 8, 9. It was formerly believed that at the winter solstice the halcyon, or kingfisher, laid its eggs in nests floating on the sea, and that the sea was then calm for a fortnight.

JOHN DRYDEN

"I considered that pleasure was not the only end of poesie; and that even the instructions of morality were not so wholly the business of a poet as that the precepts and examples of piety were to be omitted. For to leave that employment altogether to the clergy were to forget that religion was first taught in verse. . . . . By the harmony of words we elevate the mind to a sense of devotion, as our solemn music, which is inarticulate poesie, does in churches; and by the lively images of piety, adorned by action, through the senses allure the soul, which, while it is charmed in a silent joy of what it sees and hears, is struck at the same time with a secret veneration of things celestial, and is wound up insensibly into the practice of that which it admires."—Preface to *Tyrannic Love* (1669). "These little critics do not well consider what is the work of a poet, and what the graces of a poem. The story is the least part of either: I mean the foundation of it, before it is modelled by the art of him who writes it; who forms it with more care, by exposing only the beautiful parts of it to view, than a skilful lapidary sets a jewel. . . . . Judgment, indeed, is necessary in him; but 't is fancy that gives the life-touches and the secret graces to it. . . . . The employment of a poet is like that of a curious gunsmith or watchmaker: the iron or silver is not his own, but they are the least part of that which gives the value; the price lies wholly in the workmanship."—Preface to *An Evening's Love* (1668). "Imaging is in itself the very height and life of poetry. 'T is, as Longinus describes it, a discourse which, by a kind of enthusiasm, or extraordinary emotion of the soul, makes it seem to us that we behold those things which the poet paints, so as to be pleased with them and to admire them."—Preface to *The State of Innocence* (1674). "But that benefit which I consider most in it [rhyme], because I have not seldom found it, is that it bounds and circumscribes the fancy. For imagination in a poet is a faculty so wild and lawless that, like an high-ranging spaniel, it must have clogs tied to it, lest it outrun the judgment. The great easiness of blank verse renders the poet too luxuriant; he is tempted to say many things which might better be omitted, or at least shut up in fewer words. But when the difficulty of artful rhyming is interposed, where the poet commonly confines his sense to his couplet, and must contrive that sense into such words that the rhyme shall naturally follow them, not they the rhyme, the fancy then gives leisure to the judgment to come in, which, seeing so heavy a tax imposed, is ready to cut off all unnecessary expenses."—Epistle Dedicatory to *The Rival Ladies* (1663). "Let the chastisements of Juvenal be never so necessary for his new kind of satire, let him declaim as wittily and sharply as he pleases, yet still the nicest and most delicate touches of satire consist in fine raillery. . . . . How easy it is to call rogue and villain, and that wittily! but how hard to make a man appear a fool, a blockhead, or a knave, without using any of those opprobrious terms! To spare the grossness of the names, and to do the thing yet more severely, is to draw a full face and to make the nose and cheeks stand out, and yet not to employ any depth of shadowing. This is the mystery of that noble trade, which yet no master can teach to his apprentice; he may give the rules, but the scholar is never the nearer in his practice. Neither is it true that this fineness of raillery is offensive: a witty man is tickled, while he is hurt in this manner; and a fool feels it not. The occasion of an offence may possibly be given, but he cannot take it. If it be granted that in effect this way does more mischief; that a man is secretly wounded, and though he be not sensible himself yet the malicious world will find it for him; yet there is still a vast difference betwixt the slovenly butchering of a man, and the fineness of a stroke that separates the head from the body and leaves it standing in its place. A man may be capable, as Jack Ketch's wife said of his servant, of a plain piece of work, a bare hanging; but to make a malefactor die sweetly was only belonging to her husband."—*A Discourse on Satire* (1692).

(12) HEROIC STANZAS. Stanzas 6–14. ¶ 11, 12. Cromwell won his first great victory, at Marston Moor, when he was forty-five; Pompey at the same age celebrated his triumph for his conquest of Mithridates, after which his fortunes declined till his defeat by Caesar thirteen years later. ¶ 18. *that blessing:* Cromwell's dominion, or rule. ¶ 21. *sticklers*= arbitrators, peace-makers; often used of seconds or umpires in a duel, who interposed when

they saw fit. The generals referred to were the Presbyterians Essex, Waller, and others, who were suspected of being unwilling to follow up advantages gained against the king. ¶ 28. *breathing*=opening.

(13) 30. *that bold Greek:* Alexander the Great. ¶ 35, 36 *Of conquests . . . . thick:* i. e., as thick with conquests.

(13) ASTRAEA REDUX. Subheading, "A poem on the happy restoration and return of his sacred majesty, Charles the Second." Lines 21–60. ¶ 9. *their bold attempt:* i. e., the bold attempt of them. ¶ 15. *the sacred purple:* the bishops. *scarlet gown:* the nobles. ¶ 17. *Typhoeus:* a hundred-headed giant of Greek mythology; the same as Typhon.

(14) 25. *Cyclops:* the savage giant of Greek fable, whose one eye was put out by Ulysses and his companions. ¶ 27. *our painted ancestors:* the ancient Britons, who painted their bodies with a blue pigment ¶ 29. *Charles his*=Charles's.

(14) INCANTATION. From *The Indian Queen*, III. i. Ismeron, an Indian conjuror, summons the god of sleep to interpret a disturbing dream of Zempoalla, an Indian queen who has usurped the throne of Mexico. ¶ 14. *clifts*=cliffs.

(15) 24. *use*=are accustomed.

(15) SONG. From *The Maiden Queen*, IV. ii.

(15) ANNUS MIRABILIS. Subtitle, "The Year of Wonders, 1666." Stanzas 119–32, 216–30. "I have chosen to write my poem in quatrains, or stanzas of four in alternate rhyme, because I have ever judged them more noble and of greater dignity, both for the sound and number, than any other verse in use amongst us. . . . . But to proceed from wit in the general notion of it to the proper wit of an heroic or historical poem, I judge it chiefly to consist in the delightful imaging of persons, actions, passions, or things. 'T is not the jerk or sting of an epigram, nor the seeming contradiction of a poor antithesis, . . . neither is it so much the morality of a grave sentence, ... but it is some lively and apt description, dressed in such colors of speech that it sets before your eyes the absent object as perfectly and more delightfully than nature."—An Account of the Ensuing Poem.

(15) *The War with Holland.* The passage describes a part of the last day of a prolonged battle, June 1–4, 1666

(16) 12. *heartless*=faint-hearted. ¶ 26. *flix*=fur.

(16) *The Great London Fire.* The fire burned for six days and destroyed about 13,000 houses besides many public buildings

(17) 25. *letted*=hindered. ¶ 29. The heads of executed traitors were displayed on London Bridge; the heads of some of the leaders in the civil war had recently been placed there. ¶ 32. *Sabbath notes:* "The infernal hymns chanted at the witches' sabbath, a meeting concerning which antiquity told and believed strange things."—Scott.

(18) 54. *the hallowed quire:* St. Paul's Cathedral. ¶ 57. *Belgian wind:* Holland was still at war with England, and even a wind from that quarter might be conceived of as hostile.

(18) PROLOGUE TO "AURENG-ZEBE." *Aureng-Zebe*, the last of Dryden's tragedies in rhyme, was acted at the Theatre Royal, in Drury Lane, in 1675. ¶ 8. Cf. p. 430 for Dryden's former defense of rhyme in plays.

(19) 37, 38. The reference is to the rivalry of the two principal theaters, the Theatre Royal and the Duke's Theatre; both had recently built expensive playhouses. ¶ 40. *Wit*=mind; so usually in literature of this period (O. E. "witan," to know; Latin "videre," to see)

(19) FAREWELL, UNGRATEFUL TRAITOR. From *The Spanish Friar*, V. i.

(20) ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL. Part I. 45–251, 459–568; Part II. 412–36, 457–509.

(20) *Part I.* Cf. II Sam., chaps. 15–18. The device of using the parallel Scripture story, for safety and emphasis, did not originate with Dryden. In 1680 there had been printed in London a prose broadside, "Absalom's Conspiracy, or the Tragedy of Treason." It begins with a warning against the dangers of ambition for sovereignty, as shown by "instances both modern and ancient"; tells the Bible story of Absalom; and ends significantly with the

words, "A severe Admonition to all green Heads to avoid the Temptations of grey Achitophels," and "whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our Instruction." The broadside (a copy of which is in the Library of Harvard University) would seem to have suggested to Dryden the framework of his poem. ¶ 1. *The Jews:* the English. ¶ 7. *Adam-wits:* not knowing when they were well off, like Adam before his fall. ¶ 13. *Saul:* Oliver Cromwell. ¶ 14. *Ishbosheth:* Richard Cromwell. ¶ 15. *David:* Charles II. *Hebron:* in the key published in 1716 by Tonson, Dryden's publisher, Hebron is Scotland, although Flanders would be more natural here; perhaps there is a reference to the fact that Scotland had already proclaimed Charles king, and that General Monk's army, which was largely instrumental in restoring the monarchy, marched down from Scotland. ¶ 18. *humour*=caprice. ¶ 22. *golden calf:* see Exod. 32:1–6.

(21) 41. *Jerusalem:* London. ¶ 42. *Jebusites:* Roman Catholics. ¶ 60. *The Jewish rabbins:* doctors of the English Church. ¶ 64. *that Plot:* the so-called Popish Plot, an alleged plot of English Papists, in 1678, to kill Charles II and get control of the government.

(22) 74–77. A sneer at the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, or belief that the bread and wine of the sacrament are changed into the flesh and blood of Christ. *Egyptian:* French, France being taken as a typical Roman Catholic country. ¶ 84. *Hebrew priests:* clergymen of the English Church. ¶ 106. *Achitophel:* Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury. He had been Lord Chancellor, and President of the Privy Council, under Charles II; but for supporting the Duke of Monmouth, an illegitimate son of the king, as a claimant to the throne, in opposition to the succession of James, the king's Papist brother, he was thrown into the Tower on a charge of high treason, a few months before the publication of "Absalom and Achitophel"; shortly after the poem appeared, the grand jury threw out the bill against him, and he was released. ¶ 111. *disgrace:* Shaftesbury had been dismissed from the chancellorship and the Privy Council.

(23) 114. *o'er-informed:* "inform" is used here in its sense of "animate," "fill with life." ¶ 119, 120. Cf. Seneca (who is citing Aristotle), *De tranquilitate animi*, xv. 16: "Nullum magnum ingenium sine mixtura dementiae fit," "There is no great genius without admixture of madness." But Dryden may have borrowed directly from Thomas Shadwell's *Sullen Lovers* (1669), III. i: "Great wits, you know, have always a mixture of madness." *wits*=minds. ¶ 126. *unfeathered two-legged thing:* cf. the definition of man, attributed by Diogenes Laertius (*Vitae philosophorum*, vi. 40) to Plato: ζῷον δίπουν ἄπτερον, "an animal two-footed, without wings." ¶ 131. *the triple bond:* the alliance, formed in 1667, of England, Holland, and Sweden against France. It was virtually broken in 1670, when Charles made a secret treaty with France against Holland (see l. 133). ¶ 136–47. Added in the second edition, December, 1681, after Shaftesbury had been released from prison. ¶ 144. *Abbethdin*=chief justice. ¶ 149. *gown:* judges in England wear black gowns when on the bench. ¶ 153. *wanted*=lacked. *one immortal song:* "Absalom and Achitophel"; the poem was published anonymously, a fact which should be remembered in estimating Dryden's modesty.

(24) 154, 155. Cf. a couplet in Knolles's *Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603):

> Greatnesse on goodnesse loves to slide, not stand,
> And leaves for Fortune's ice Vertue's firme land.

¶ 169. *the King himself a Jebusite:* as a matter of fact Charles had agreed, in the secret treaty with France, to declare himself a Roman Catholic. ¶ 177. *warlike Absalon:* James, Duke of Monmouth (1649–85), recognized by Charles II as his illegitimate son, had commanded the English army in the second war with Holland in 1672–74, against the Scotch Covenanters in 1675, and in the war with France in 1678; he was a bold soldier, though no general. ¶ 180. *his title:* his title to the throne; the king steadily refused to admit that there had been a contract of marriage between himself and the duke's mother, the notorious Lucy Walters.

(25) 203. *feeds:* a grammatical error for "feed." ¶ 210. *prevail*=avail (a Gallicism; cf. French "prévaloir," to avail, take advantage of). ¶ 219. *plighted vows:* Charles had

formally acknowledged James as his legitimate successor. ¶ 226–35. This very indulgent portrait of the dissolute and sometimes violent duke was due to Dryden's knowledge that the king still loved the young man, and to his hope that a reconciliation might yet take place. It was not to be. In 1682 Monmouth made another tour through the western counties, stirring up popular sentiment in his favor by his singular personal charm. He was arrested, but was released on bail; in 1683 he fled to Holland, and probably never saw the king again. After the accession of James, Monmouth made an unsuccessful attempt to raise the west of England in revolution; he was taken prisoner, and died on the scaffold in 1685. Shaftesbury had died in Holland, two years before.

(26) 262. *The Solymaean rout:* the London rabble (Latin "Solyma," Jerusalem). ¶ 266. *an Ethnic plot:* the Popish Plot. ¶ 268. *Levites:* Presbyterian ministers, who had now lost the power which they had under the Commonwealth ("the Judges' days"), being ousted from their churches by the Act of Uniformity, which required every clergyman to use the prayer-book and assent to everything in it. ¶ 272. *Sanhedrin:* Parliament.

(27) 293. *Zimri:* George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, a brilliant but profligate man; he was for a time chief minister under Charles, but, being dismissed from office in 1674, he threw himself into the opposition party; he was one of the writers of *The Rehearsal* (1671), in which Dryden was severely ridiculed for his plays. This portrait of Buckingham was a favorite with the author, who wrote thus of it in his *Discourse on Satire* (1692): "The character of Zimri, in my 'Absalom,' is, in my opinion, worth the whole poem; it is not bloody, but it is ridiculous enough; and he for whom it was intended was too witty to resent it as an injury. If I had railed, I might have suffered for it justly; but I managed my own work more happily, perhaps more dexterously. I avoided the mention of great crimes, and applied myself to the representing of blind sides and little extravagances; to which the wittier a man is, he is generally the more obnoxious. It succeeded as I wished; the jest went round, and he was laughed at in his turn who began the frolic."

(28) *Part II.* ¶ 1. *Doeg:* Elkanah Settle, a poor poet and playwright of the day, with whom Dryden had long been at odds; he had recently replied to "Absalom and Achitophel" by a poem entitled "Absalom Senior," in which James, the king's brother, was represented as Absalom. ¶ 28. *Og:* Thomas Shadwell; see the notes on "Mac Flecknoe" below. ¶ 30. *link*=torch

(30) Mac Flecknoe. "Mac Flecknoe" is a name invented by Dryden for Thomas Shadwell, a contemporary poet and dramatist; it means "son of Flecknoe." Richard Flecknoe was a dull Irish poet, who had died in 1678. Shadwell and Dryden had formerly been friends; but Shadwell was a Whig, while Dryden was a Tory, and political antagonism made them enemies. "Mac Flecknoe" was directly occasioned by Shadwell's attack upon Dryden, in a poem entitled "The Medal of John Bayes"—a reply to Dryden's poem, "The Medal," in which Shaftesbury and the Whigs were scourged. "Mac Flecknoe" was published anonymously, being announced as "by the author of 'Absalom and Achitophel.'" ¶ 12. *wit*=mind. ¶ 25. *goodly fabric:* Shadwell was large and fat. ¶ 29. *Heywood and Shirley:* Thomas Heywood and James Shirley, dramatists in the reigns of James I and Charles I; they were playwrights of considerable ability, and Dryden's contemptuous reference to them shows the change of taste in the England of the Restoration and the growing ignorance of the literature of the preceding age. ¶ 33. *Norwich drugget:* drugget was a coarse woolen cloth; Norwich was a center for the manufacture of cloths.

(31) 42. There seems to be a reference both to Shadwell's play, *Epsom Wells*, and to the custom of tossing obnoxious persons in a blanket. ¶ 43. *Arion:* an early Greek poet, of whom there was a legend that, when he was thrown into the sea, dolphins, entranced by his songs, carried him to shore. ¶ 53. *St. André's feet:* St. André was a celebrated dancing-master of the time. ¶ 54. *'Psyche's': Psyche* was an opera by Shadwell. ¶ 57. *Singleton:* a stage-singer. ¶ 59. *Villerius:* a general in *The Siege of Rhodes*, an opera by William Davenant; "lute and sword" (l. 58) ridicules the combination of singing and fighting. ¶ 64.

Augusta: London. The Romans so named the city, in honor of Augustus Cæsar; and the name was now revived, partly as flattery to Charles II, who was sometimes addressed as Cæsar and Augustus. ¶ 65. *much to fears inclined:* an allusion to the recent fears of a Popish plot. ¶ 67. *hight*=was called (the sole survival in English of a passive form without the use of the auxiliary "to be"; O. E. "hatte," is or was called). ¶ 78. *Maximins:* Maximin was the hero in Dryden's play, *Tyrannic Love;* he thus defies the gods with his last breath:

> And, shoving back this earth on which I sit,
> I 'll mount—and scatter all the gods I hit.

¶ 79. *Fletcher:* John Fletcher (1579–1625), who in collaboration with Francis Beaumont wrote many excellent plays; they were more popular than Shakspere's plays on the Restoration stage. *buskins:* buskins stand for tragedy, from the fact that Greek actors wore high-heeled shoes, called buskins, when playing tragedy. ¶ 80. *Jonson:* Ben Jonson (1573?–1637); his comedies, by their realism and ingenuity of plot, pleased the taste of Dryden's age more than the romantic comedies of Shakspere. *socks:* socks stand for comedy, from the fact that Greek actors wore low-heeled shoes, called socks, when playing comedy. ¶ 81. *gentle Simkin:* Simkin was a cobbler in a contemporary interlude, or farce; shoemaking was called "the gentle craft." ¶ 83. *clinches*=repartees, puns, etc. ¶ 84. *Panton:* a noted punster.

(32) 87. *Decker:* Thomas Decker, or Dekker (1570?–1637?), a dramatist. ¶ 91–93. *The Miser* and *The Humourists* are plays by Shadwell. Raymond is a character in the latter play; Bruce, a character in Shadwell's *Virtuoso.* There seems to be no particular reference in the use of the word "Hypocrites." ¶ 97. Bunhill Row is a little to the north of the Barbican; Watling Street is to the south, not much farther off; the satire in limiting Shadwell's fame to this restricted area, with the mock boast in "distant," is obvious. ¶ 102. *Ogleby:* John Ogleby (1600–76), an obscure poet and translator. ¶ 104. *Bilked:* defrauded of their pay by the small sale of poor poets' works. *yeomen:* a hundred yeomen used to form the bodyguard of the English king. ¶ 105. *Herringman:* a leading publisher. ¶ 106. *the hoary prince:* Flecknoe. ¶ 108. *our young Ascanius:* Shadwell. (In the *Æneid* Ascanius is the son and heir of Æneas.) ¶ 108, 109. Cf. the *Æneid,* xii. 168, "Et juxta Ascanius, magnae spes altera Romae," "And Ascanius next, the other hope of great Rome" ¶ 110, 111. Cf. the *Æneid,* ii. 682–84:

> Ecce levis summo de vertice visus Iuli
> Fundere lumen apex, tactuque innoxia mollis
> Lambere flamma comas et circum tempora pasci.

Dryden thus rendered the lines in his translation of Virgil (1697):

> Strange to relate, from young Iülus' head
> A lambent flame arose, which gently spread
> Around his brows, and on his temples fed.

¶ 118. *unction*=the act of anointing, or consecrating. *made*=performed. ¶ 120. *sinister*=left. *ball:* English kings at their coronation held a ball, in the right hand, as a symbol of dominion over the earth. ¶ 121. *ale:* selected for its heavy, dulling quality. ¶ 122. *"Love's Kingdom":* a play by Flecknoe. ¶ 125. *recorded*=sung (*Psyche* was an opera).

(33) 136, 137. Cf. the *Æneid,* vi. 78, 79:

> Bacchatur vates, magnum si pectore possit
> Excussisse deum.

"The prophetess rages, if perchance she may shake from her breast the great god." ¶ 151. *George:* George Etheridge (or Etherege) author of several popular Restoration comedies, in which occur the characters mentioned in the next two lines. ¶ 163. *Sedley:* Sir Charles Sedley, a wit and light poet (see p. 7), who had revised one of Shadwell's plays and written a prologue for another; Dryden insinuates that the best parts of Shadwell's plays were written by Sedley. ¶ 166, 167. Dryden unduly depreciates Shadwell, who was far from dull; his plays have many really comic characters and situations, and his *Bury Fair,* at least, has con-

siderable vivacity as a whole. ¶ 168. *Sir Formal's oratory:* Sir Formal Trifle is a character in Shadwell's *Virtuoso;* the quality of his "oratory" may be inferred from his name.

(34) 170. *northern dedications:* dedications to the Duke of Newcastle; Newcastle is near the Scottish border. ¶ 172. *arrogating:* i. e., to flatter Shadwell, his friends would presumptuously claim that his plays were like Jonson's. *hostile name:* i. e., Jonson's mind was unlike Shadwell's and antagonistic to it; see ll. 175–86. ¶ 179. *Prince Nicander's:* Prince Nicander is a character in *Psyche.* ¶ 188. Cf. Shadwell's dedication to *The Virtuoso:* "Four of the humours are entirely new; and without vanity I may say I ne'er produced a comedy that had not some natural humour in it not represented before, and I hope I never shall." ¶ 189–92. An adaptation of lines from Shadwell's epilogue to his *Humourists:*

> A humour is the bias of the mind
> By which with violence 't is one way inclined;
> It makes our actions lean on one side still.
> And in all changes that way bend the will.

¶ 193. *mountain belly:* Jonson, in "My Picture," used this expression of himself, and Shadwell prided himself on resembling Jonson in body as in mind. ¶ 194. *tympany of sense:* a tympany is a distended condition of the abdomen, due to dropsy, etc. (Greek τύμπανον, a kettle-drum); the word is used figuratively for bombast, swelling speech full of emptiness; by "tympany of sense," Dryden means that Shadwell's "mountain belly" is abnormal and unhealthy, and a symbol of the bombast of his writings, not of mental greatness as Jonson's was. ¶ 196. *kilderkin*=a small barrel. ¶ 204. *iambics:* satiric verses (because iambic verse was used in Greek and Latin satires). ¶ 207. *wings display and altars raise:* i. e., write poems made to resemble wings and altars in shape by variation in the length of the lines; this fantastic custom had been practiced by lesser English poets for several generations and was often ridiculed.

(35) 212, 213. Bruce and Longville, characters in *The Virtuoso*, play a similar trick on Sir Formal Trifle. ¶ 214–17. Cf. the story of Elijah and Elisha (II Kings 2:9–13).

(35) Religio Laici. Lines 1–41, 276–94, 370–456. The subtitle, "A layman's faith," translates the title. "The verses were written for an ingenious young gentleman, my friend, upon his translation of *The Critical History of the Old Testament*, composed by the learned Father Simon; the verses therefore are addressed to the translator of that work, and the style of them is, what it ought to be, epistolary."—Preface. ¶ 1–12. Nearly the same figure is in Donne's *Biathanatos* (1644); if Dryden borrowed the hint from Donne, it throws interesting light upon the range of his reading. Donne says: "That light which issues from the moon doth best represent and express that which in ourselves we call the light of nature; for as that in the moon is permanent and ever there, and yet it is unequal, various, pale, and languishing, so is our light of nature changeable. . . . . And then those artificial lights which ourselves make for our use and service, as fires, tapers, and such, resemble the light of reason. . . . . But because of these two kinds of light the first is too weak and the other false, ... we have therefore the sun, which is the fountain and treasure of all created light, for an emblem of that third-best light of our understanding, which is the Word of God."—*Biathanatos*, Part III, Distinction i, sec. 1. ¶ 16, 17. An allusion to the philosophy of Anaxagoras (of the fifth century B. C.), who believed in a World-Soul as the regulating principle of the universe. ¶ 18, 19. An allusion to the philosophy of Democritus (of the fifth century B. C.), who taught that material atoms were the ultimate elements of the world, and that all things were made by their fortuitous combination; cf. Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, v 422–31:

> Sed quia multa modis multis primordia rerum
> Ex infinito iam tempore percita plagis
> Ponderibusque suis consuerunt concita ferri
> Omnimodisque coire atque omnia pertemptare,
> Quaecumque inter se possent congressa creare,
> Propterea fit uti magnum volgata per aevom

Omne genus coetus et motus ex periundo
Tandem conveniant ea quae convecta repente
Magnarum rerum fiunt exordia saepe,
Terrai maris et caeli generisque animantum.

"But since many first-beginnings of things have in many ways, during infinite time past, been impelled by impact and by their own weight to be carried along and to unite in every manner and make complete trial of every thing that they could create among themselves by coming together, it accordingly happens that, spread abroad through long ages, after trying every kind of union and motion, they at length come together in those masses which, suddenly borne together, often become the rudiments of great things, of earth, sea, and heaven, and the race of living things." ¶ 21. *the Stagyrite:* Aristotle (384–322 B. C.), who was born in Stagira, Macedonia. ¶ 22. *Epicurus:* Epicurus (342–270 B. C.), the founder of the Epicurean school of philosophy, accepted the atomistic theory of Democritus.

(36) 31. *wiser madmen:* the Stoics. ¶ 33. *In Pleasure some:* the Epicureans. ¶ 57. *Esdras:* see Ezra 7:10; Neh., chap. 8; I Esd. 8:7; according to tradition Ezra, or Esdras not only revived the knowledge of the Pentateuch among the Jews after the Captivity, but also made alterations and additions.

(38) 147. *Sternhold's:* Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins were the authors of a prosaic metrical translation of the Psalms (about 1549) *Shadwell's:* cf. "Mac Flecknoe" (p. 30) and the notes on it (p. 433).

(39) To the Memory of Mrs. Anne Killigrew. Anne Killigrew, daughter of an Anglican clergyman, and maid of honor to the Duchess of York (afterward queen), died of smallpox in her twenty-fifth year, in 1685; Dryden's ode was prefixed to a collected edition of her poems the following year. ¶ 23. *traduction:* transmission from parents; this view of the origin of the soul was denied by many, who held that the soul of each human being was created directly by God and put into the body. ¶ 26, 27. Her father and his two brothers had all written plays.

(40) 34–37. The lines are based upon the Pythagorean and Platonic doctrine of the transmigration of souls, according to which the soul is incarnated in lower animals for its sins, and inhabits fairer and fairer bodies as it grows more pure. ¶ 38. *Return:* i. e., to heaven, whence it first came. ¶ 43. *in trine:* a conjunction of stars in a triangle was a favorable omen in astrology. ¶ 49. *the music of the spheres:* in the Ptolemaic astronomy the earth was the center of the universe; around it revolved the planets and stars, set in crystal spheres, or hollow concentric globes, and their motions, at rates of speed that varied according to mathematical proportions, made the music of the spheres, which was too fine for mortal ears to hear. ¶ 50, 51. It is fabled that a swarm of bees lit on the mouth of the infant Sophocles and distilled their honey upon his lips; hence the wonderful sweetness of his verse. ¶ 68. *Arethusian:* Arethusa, pursued by the river-god Alpheus, was changed into a fountain by Diana and fled under earth and sea to the island of Ortygia.

(41) 82. *Epictetus with his lamp:* Epictetus (of the second half of the first century B. C.), the Stoic philosopher, was a man of lofty ethical ideals and noble character; Lucian refers to his earthenware lamp, which was bought after his death for three thousand drachmas. ¶ 93 *Painture*=painting (from French "peinture"). ¶ 95. *A Chamber of Dependences:* i.e., a legislative body representing the realms dependent upon poetry (cf. l. 98). ¶ 103. *demains*=domains (Old French "demaine"; cf. English "demesne").

(42) 128. *King:* James II. ¶ 134. *Our phoenix queen:* there was supposed to be only one phoenix in the world at a time, each bird consuming itself in the fire after a long life, and its successor arising from the ashes; hence the term came to be used for anything unique, especially for anything uniquely excellent.

(43) 162. *thus Orinda died:* "Orinda" was the *nom de plume* of Katharine Philips, a poetess, who died of smallpox in 1664. ¶ 180, 181. See Joel 3:12.

(44) The Hind and the Panther. Part I. 1–105, 154–69. 327–50; Part II. 305–98.

Not long after the accession of James II to the throne, Dryden became a Roman Catholic.

(44) *Part I.* ¶ 1. *Hind:* the Roman Catholic Church. ¶ 6. *Scythian shafts:* the ancient Scythians were famous as archers and shot poisoned arrows. ¶ 8. *doomed*=sentenced. ¶ 10. *hero's:* the word is used as in classical mythology, referring to persons (such as Hercules and Achilles) who had one human and one divine parent. ¶ 14. *Caledonian:* the word is usually applied to Scotland only, but here it seems to refer to the whole of Great Britain. ¶ 15. *their native walk:* Britain was a Catholic country from the seventh to near the middle of the sixteenth century.

(45) 23. *corps*=corpses, bodies. ¶ 35. *The bloody Bear:* the Independents, who disowned the authority of the papacy, the Church of England, and the Presbyterian church alike; "bloody" recalls the conspicuous part the Independents played in the Civil War. ¶ 36. *Unlicked to form:* an allusion to the popular notion that bear cubs are born shapeless and must be licked into form by the mother bear, and also to the uncouthness and lack of culture which characterized the Independents as a class. ¶ 37. *the quaking Hare:* the Quakers. ¶ 39. *the buffoon Ape:* the atheists. Atheists were often likened to apes as having the outward semblance of human beings but lacking the crowning attribute of man—the religious sense. ¶ 41. *the Lion:* the king of England. ¶ 43–52. Some of the German Baptists, in the sixteenth century, were grossly immoral and openly rebellious against the state. ¶ 53. *Reynard:* the Arians, followers of Arius (of the fourth century A. D.), who affirmed that Christ was not equal to God, but a subordinate though divine being. This heresy was condemned at the Council of Nice (325 A. D.), under the lead of Athanasius. In the sixteenth century it was taken up and carried farther by Socinus, who believed that Christ was miraculously conceived and divinely endowed but was not to be worshiped.

(46) 85. *my reason to my faith compel:* i. e., by accepting the doctrines of the Trinity and the divinity of Christ (ll. 79–82), which he had believed while he was a member of the English Church. ¶ 86. Dryden refers to the common objection to the doctrine of transubstantiation, viz., that the bread and wine of the sacrament seem, to sight, touch, and taste, to be still mere bread and wine, not the flesh and blood of Christ. ¶ 95. *impassible*=incapable of suffering. *penetrating parts:* i. e., piercing into the inmost parts of matter instead of thrusting them to one side; this was considered an attribute of spirit in contrast to matter. ¶ 96–99. "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you."—John 20:26.

(47) 103. *one body:* Christ's body, which, if it is present in the sacraments, must be in many different places at once, throughout the Christian world. ¶ 112. *the wolfish race:* the Presbyterians. ¶ 115. *His ragged tail:* the Genevan gown commonly worn by the Presbyterians; it hung down loosely around the figure. ¶ 117. *pricks up:* Presbyterians wore black skull-caps and cut their hair short, which made their ears very conspicuous. ¶ 122. *The Panther:* the Church of England.

(48) *Part II.*

(49) 40, 41. "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."—II Peter 3:16.

(50) 78. *Hungary:* Hungary had recently been a bone of contention between Germany and Turkey, a part of it being ceded to the former in 1686. ¶ 93, 94. "Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he."—John 18:4, 5.

(50) NO, NO, POOR SUFF'RING HEART. From *Cleomenes*, II. ii.

(51) TO MY DEAR FRIEND, MR. CONGREVE. William Congreve (1670–1729) was the most polished of the Restoration dramatists. ¶ 5. *giant race:* "There were giants in

the earth in those days."—Genesis 6:4. *the Flood:* the Civil War and the Puritan Commonwealth, that swept away the monarchy and the Elizabethan stage. ¶ 7. *Like Janus:* the fabulous first king of Italy, who taught his people agriculture. ¶ 14. See I Kings, chap. 6, and Ezra, chaps. 3–6. ¶ 15. *Vitruvius:* an architect in the reign of Augustus, whose book on architecture became a great authority in the Renaissance and later. ¶ 20. *Fletcher's:* John Fletcher (1579–1625), in collaboration with Francis Beaumont, wrote many pleasing comedies and affecting tragedies. ¶ 22. *Jonson:* Ben Jonson (1573?–1637), a dramatist of great learning and critical acumen. ¶ 29. *Etherege:* Sir George Etherege (1634–91?), author of several comedies delightfully light of touch. *courtship*=elegance of manner and speech, such as is found in king's courts. *Southerne's:* Thomas Southerne (1660–1746) was a minor dramatist of the day; the purity of his style is not remarkable, but Dryden liked him. ¶ 30. *Wycherley:* William Wycherley (1640–1715), one of the pioneers in Restoration comedy. ¶ 31. *in blooming youth:* Congreve (1670–1729) was only twenty-three at this time. ¶ 35–38. Fabius Maximus, who had tired out Hannibal by masterly avoidance of decisive battles, died in 203 B. C., the year before his successor, Scipio Africanus, overcame Hannibal; but he had lived to see Scipio defeat Hannibal's brother, Hasdrubal, and become consul before he was thirty years old, although the legal age was forty-five.

(52) 39. *Romano:* Giulio Romano (1492–1546) was the pupil and never the teacher of Raphael, who was nine years his senior. ¶ 45, 46. The vicious and incapable Edward II was deposed in 1327, and was at once succeeded by the vigorous Edward III, who overcame Robert Bruce of Scotland, and won the great battles of Cressy and Poitiers against France. ¶ 48. *Tom the second:* Thomas Rymer, a poor critic and poet, who had succeeded Dryden as historiographer royal. *Tom the first:* Thomas Shadwell, who succeeded Dryden as poet laureate; he had just died; see "Mac Flecknoe" (p. 30) and the notes on it (p. 433). ¶ 55. *Thy first attempt: The Old Bachelor*, acted in January, 1693. ¶ 56. *this: The Double Dealer*, acted in November of the same year. ¶ 72. *Be kind to my remains:* Congreve complied by editing Dryden's plays after his death.

(53) ALEXANDER'S FEAST. "I am writing a song for St. Cecilia's feast. . . . . This is troublesome, and no way beneficial; but I could not deny the stewards of the feast, who came in a body to me to desire that kindness."—Dryden, in a letter to his sons, September 3, 1697. "Mr. St. John, afterwards Lord Bolingbroke, happening to pay a visit to Dryden, ... found him in an unusual agitation of spirits, even to a trembling. On enquiring the cause, 'I have been up all night,' replied the old bard. 'My musical friends made me promise to write them an ode for their feast of St. Cecilia; I have been so struck with the subject which occurred to me that I could not leave it till I had completed it; here it is, finished at one sitting.' This anecdote was imparted by Lord Bolingbroke to Pope, by Pope to Mr. Gilbert West, by him to the ingenious friend who communicated it to me."—Joseph Warton, *An Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, Vol. II (1782). According to another credible report, published by Doctor Thomas Birch, Dryden wrote to a friend that he was almost a fortnight in composing and correcting it. All these statements may well be true, for revision is often a slower process than first composition. "I am glad to hear from all hands that my ode is esteemed the best of all my poetry by all the town; I thought so myself when I writ it, but, being old, I mistrusted my own judgment."—Dryden, in a letter to Tonson, December, 1697. Since 1683 St. Cecilia's Day, November 22, had been celebrated nearly every year in London by the performance of an original ode newly set to music; Dryden had already written one poem for the festival, in 1687, his "Song for St. Cecilia's Day." St. Cecilia, a Roman virgin martyred in the third century, became the patron saint of music, and was credited with the invention of the organ.

(53) 1. *for Persia won:* a Latinism for "the winning of Persia"; the feast may be supposed to have occurred in Persepolis, soon after the battle of Arbela, in 331 B. C., when the Persian army was beaten for the third time and all Persia lay at the feet of Alexander. ¶ 2. *Philip's:* Philip, king of Macedonia, was the father of Alexander. ¶ 9. *Thais:* a

famous Greek courtesan, the mistress of Alexander. ¶ 20. *Timotheus:* a Greek musician, a favorite of Alexander; Dryden may have meant the great Timotheus, an Athenian musician and poet, forgetting or ignoring the fact that he had died a generation before. ¶ 25. *from Jove:* i. e., with a legend about Jove—the one that follows. ¶ 29. *Sublime*=raised aloft. *spires:* the coils of the dragon. ¶ 30. *Olympia:* the mother of Alexander.

(54) 33–38. Intoxicated by his uninterrupted series of victories, Alexander began to think himself more than mortal; he consulted the oracle of Jupiter Ammon, in Libya, and the oracle greeted him as the son of Jupiter, not of Philip; the flatterers who surrounded him, learning of his weakness, were quick to gratify it in the manner indicated in the poem. ¶ 39–41. The nod of Zeus was supposed to shake the heavens; cf. the *Iliad*, i. 528–30, and the *Æneid*, x. 115.

(55) 72. *his hand:* "his" refers to Timotheus. *his pride:* "his" refers to Alexander. ¶ 75. *Darius:* the Persian emperor. ¶ 97. *Lydian measures:* in ancient music there were three principal measures, or modes, the Dorian, the Phrygian, and the Lydian; the last was sweet and melting, perhaps receiving its name from the soft and luxurious character of the Lydians.

(57) 138. *Grecian:* in the great contest between the East and the West, the Macedonians regarded themselves as a part of the larger Greek world. ¶ 147. Suidas (probably of the second half of the tenth century A. D.), a Byzantine lexicographer, says that the music of Timotheus made on Alexander "so powerful an impression that once, in the midst of a performance by Timotheus, ... he started from his seat and seized his arms." ¶ 148–50. There is an old tradition that, at a great festival in Persepolis, Thais induced Alexander to set fire to the Persian palace. ¶ 162. *the vocal frame:* the organ. ¶ 170. Cf. "A Song for St. Cecilia's Day," ll. 51–54, in which the legend is given more fully:

> But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher:
> When to her organ vocal breath was given,
> An angel heard, and straight appeared,
> Mistaking earth for heaven.

(58) PALAMON AND ARCITE. Book II. 171–254. The poem is a free rendering into modern English of Chaucer's "Knightes Tale." In the days of Theseus, king of Athens, two cousins, Palamon and Arcite, whom Theseus had taken captive when he conquered Thebes, lay in prison near the king's palace. From the prison windows they saw and loved Emily, sister to Hippolyta the queen, and became furious rivals. After some time Arcite was released from prison by the intercession of a friend, but was banished from Athens on pain of death; trusting to the change in his appearance wrought by unrequited love, he finally returned, and took service in Theseus' court, to be near Emily. One morning, while riding in a wood near Athens, he comes upon Palamon, who has just broken prison, and they agree to fight to the death for Emily. At this point the selection begins.

(59) 26. *foin*=thrust. *pass*=lunge. ¶ 32. *fared*=behaved. ¶ 65. *laund*=an open space in a wood.

(60) TRANSLATIONS FROM HOMER. *Iliad*, i. 667–88. Agamemnon has deprived Achilles of his prize, the fair Briseis, and Thetis, the sea-goddess, mother of Achilles, prays to Jove on behalf of her son. ¶ 1, 2. The gods have been feasting for twelve days with the blameless Ethiopians; they now return to Olympus.

(61) HUNTING SONG. From the *Secular Masque*. The masque was written as part of a benefit performance for Dryden at the Theatre Royal five weeks before his death; it was Dryden's last poem.

CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM

> Hail, prince of wits! thy fumbling age is past;
> Thy youth and wit and art 's renewed at last. . . . .
> What though prodigious thunder stripped thy brows
> Of envied bays, and the dull world allows

Shadwell should wear them? We 'll applaud the change;
Where nations feel it, who can think it strange! . . . .
Hang 't! give the fop ingrateful world its will;
He wears the laurel—thou deserv'st it still. . . . .
Yet brisk and airy too thou fill'st the stage,
Unbroke by fortune, undecayed by age.
French wordy wit by thine was long surpassed;
Now Rome 's thy captive, and by thee we taste
Of their rich dainties, but so finely dressed,
Theirs was a country meal, thine a triumphant feast.
—Luke Milbourne, in 1690, on Dryden's *Amphitryon*.

"This is not that Virgil so much admired in the Augustaean age, an author whom Mr. Dryden once thought untranslatable, but a Virgil of another stamp, of a coarser alloy, a silly, impertinent, nonsensical writer, of a various and uncertain style, a mere Alexander Ross, or somebody inferior to him."—Luke Milbourne, *Notes on Dryden's Virgil* (1697).

How long, great poet, shall thy sacred lays
Provoke our wonder and transcend our praise?
Can neither injuries of time or age
Damp thy poetic heat and quench thy rage? . . . .
Thou mak'st the beauties of the Romans known,
And England boasts of riches not her own;
Thy lines have heightened Virgil's majesty,
And Horace wonders at himself in thee.
Thou teachest Persius to inform our isle
In smoother numbers and a clearer style;
And Juvenal, instructed in thy page,
Edges his satire and improves his rage.
Thy copy casts a fairer light on all,
And still outshines the bright original.
—Joseph Addison, 1693.

L—gh aimed to rise above great Dr—n's height,
But lofty Dryden kept a steady flight.
Like Daedalus he times with prudent care
His well-waxed wings, and waves in middle air.
Crowned with the sacred snow of reverend years,
Dryden above the ignobler crowd appears,
Raises his laurelled head, and, as he goes,
O'ershoulders all, and like Apollo shows.
The native spark which first advanced his name
By industry he kindled to a flame.
Then to a different coast his judgment flew;
He left the old world behind, and found a new.
On the strong columns of his lasting wit
Instructive Dryden built, and peopled it.
In every page delight and profit shines;
Immortal sense flows in his mighty lines.
His images so strong and lively be,
I hear not words alone but substance see,
The proper phrase of our exalted tongue
To such perfection from his numbers sprung;
His tropes continued, and his figures fine,
All of a piece throughout and all divine.
Adapted words and sweet expressions move
Our various passions, pity, rage, and love.
—Anonymous, 1700.

"Wheresoever his incomparable writings have been scattered by the hands of travellers into foreign nations, the loss of so great a man must needs be lamented amongst their bards and rabbis. . . . . Those who were his enemies while he was living (for no man lives without) his death has now made such friends to his memory that they acknowledge they cannot but in justice give him this character, that he was one of the greatest scholars, the most correct

dramatic poet, and the best writer of heroic verse, that any age has produced in England."—*The London Spy*, 1700.

Our great forefathers, in poetic song,
Were rude in diction though their sense was strong;
Well-measured verse they knew not how to frāme,
Their words ungraceful and the cadence lame.
Too far they wildly ranged to start the prey,
And did too much of fairy-land display;
And in their rugged dissonance of lines,
True manly thought debased with trifles shines. . . . .
Such was the scene when Dryden came to found
More perfect lays, with harmony of sound:
What lively colors glow on every draught!
How bright his images, how raised his thought!
The parts proportioned to their proper place,
With strength supported, and adorned with grace.
With what perfection did his artful hand
The various kinds of poesy command!
And the whole choir of Muses at his call,
In his rich song, which was inspired of all,
Spoke from the chords of his enchanting lyre,
And gave his breast the fullness of their fire. . . . .
Who, after him, can equally rehearse
Such various subjects in such various verse?
And with the raptures of his strain control,
At will, each passion, and command the soul?
Not ancient Orpheus, whose surprising lyre,
Did beasts, and rocks, and rooted woods inspire,
More sweetly sung, nor with superior art
Soothed the sad shades and softened Pluto's heart.
All owned, at distance, his distinguished name.
Nor vainly vied to share his awful fame;
Unrivalled, living, he enlarged his praise,
And, dying, left without an heir his bays.

—Jabez Hughes, 1707.

ANNE, COUNTESS OF WINCHILSEA

(61) THE TREE.

(62) 26. *prevent*=come before, anticipate.

(62) TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

(63) 23. *division:* "A course of notes so running into each other as to form one series or chain, to be sung in one breath to one syllable."—*The International Dictionary.*

(63) A NOCTURNAL REVERIE. ¶ 19. *Salisb'ry:* Lady Salisbury; probably Anne Tufton (wife of the third Earl of Salisbury), whose mother had been an intimate friend o Lady Winchilsea.

JOSEPH ADDISON

(64) AN ACCOUNT OF THE GREATEST ENGLISH POETS. Lines 9–35, 48–71, 78–85.

(66) 59. *Sacharissa's:* "Sacharissa" was the name invented by Waller for Lady Dorothy Sidney, to whom he paid court for some time.

(66) THE CAMPAIGN. Lines 259–92. The poem celebrates the victory of the English over the French in the battle of Blenheim, August 2, 1704, under the leadership of the Duke of Marlborough.

JONATHAN SWIFT

(74) VERSES ON THE DEATH OF DR. SWIFT. Lines 151–64, 207–44, 301–72. ¶ 18. *Arbuthnot:* Doctor John Arbuthnot, physician and man of letters, a friend of Swift, Pope, and their set; cf. Pope's "Epistle to Doctor Arbuthnot" (p. 121). ¶ 19. *St. John:* Henry

St. John, Lord Bolingbroke, statesman and political writer, a friend of Pope and Swift; cf. Pope's "Essay on Man" (p. 131).

(75) 54. *the Rose:* a tavern in London, near the theaters, and much frequented by clubs.

(76) 77. *stars and garters:* the insignia of the Order of the Garter, the highest order of knighthood in England. ¶ 78. *Chartres:* an infamous money-lender of the times. ¶ 96. Ps. 146:3: "Put not your trust in princes." ¶ 105, 106. In 1713 Queen Anne offered a reward of £300 for the discovery of the author of Swift's pamphlet, *The Public Spirit of the Whigs;* and in 1724 a like reward was offered for the discovery of the author of the fourth of Swift's *Drapier's Letters.*

(77) On Poetry. Lines 305–44. ¶ 1. *Cibber:* Colley Cibber, actor, playwright, and small poet, was made poet laureate in 1730; cf. Pope's attack upon him as a dull poet, in "The Dunciad" (p. 113). ¶ 2. *birthday strains:* one of the chief functions of the poet laureate was to write poems, usually bombastic odes, on the birthdays of members of the royal family. ¶ 15. *Hobbes:* Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), an English philosopher.

ALEXANDER POPE

"About fifteen I got acquainted with Mr. Walsh. He used to encourage me much, and used to tell me that there was one way left of excelling: for though we had several great poets, we never had had any one great poet that was correct; and he desired me to make that my study and aim."—Pope, quoted in Spence's *Anecdotes*, Section VII (1742–43). "I am convinced, as well as you, that one may correct too much; for in poetry, as in painting, a man may lay colors one upon another till they stiffen and deaden the piece. . . . . I have not attempted anything of a pastoral comedy, because, I think, the taste of our age will not relish a poem of that sort. People seek for what they call wit, on all subjects and in all places, not considering that nature loves truth so well that it hardly ever admits of flourishing: conceit is to nature what paint is to beauty; it is not only needless, but impairs what it would improve There is a certain majesty in simplicity, which is far above all the quaintness of wit."—Letter to Walsh, July 2, 1706. "I must take notice of . . . . your hint 'that the sprightliness of wit despises method.' This is true enough if by wit you mean no more than fancy or conceit; but in the better notion of wit, considered as propriety, surely method is not only necessary for perspicuity and harmony of parts, but gives beauty even to the minute and particular thoughts, which receive an additional advantage from those which precede or follow in their due place."—Letter to Wycherley, November 29, 1707. "The things that I have written fastest have always pleased the most. I wrote the 'Essay on Criticism' fast, for I had digested all the matter, in prose, before I began upon it in verse. 'The Rape of the Lock' was written fast: all the machinery was added afterwards; and the making that and what was published before hit so well together is, I think, one of the greatest proofs of judgment of anything I ever did. I wrote most of the 'Iliad' fast; a great deal of it on journeys, from the little pocket Homer on that shelf there; and often forty or fifty verses in a morning in bed. 'The Dunciad' cost me as much pains as anything I ever wrote."—Pope, quoted in Spence's *Anecdotes*, Section IV (1734–36). "I learned versification wholly from Dryden's works, who had improved it much beyond any of our former poets, and would probably have brought it to its perfection had not he been unhappily obliged to write so often in haste."—Pope, quoted in Spence's *Anecdotes*, Section VII (1742–43). "There are indeed certain niceties, which, though not much observed even by correct versifiers, I cannot but think deserve to be better regarded. . . . . Every nice ear must, I believe, have observed that in any smooth English verse of ten syllables there is naturally a pause at the fourth, fifth, or sixth syllable. It is upon these the ear rests, and upon the judicious change and management of which depends the variety of versification. . . . . Now, I fancy that, to preserve an exact harmony and variety, the pause at the fourth or sixth should not be continued above three lines together

without the interposition of another; else it will be apt to weary the ear with one continued tone, at least it does mine. That at the fifth runs quicker, and carries not quite so dead a weight, so tires not so much though it be continued longer. . . . . I would also object to the irruption of Alexandrine verses of twelve syllables, which, I think, should never be allowed but when some remarkable beauty or propriety in them atones for the liberty. Mr. Dryden has been too free of these, especially in his latter works. I am of the same opinion as to triple rhymes." —Letter to Walsh, October 22, 1706 "After reading the *Persian Tales* (and I had been reading Dryden's *Fables* just before them) I had some thought of writing a Persian fable, in which I should have given a full loose to description and imagination. It would have been a very wild thing if I had executed it, but might not have been unentertaining."—Pope, quoted in Spence's *Anecdotes*, Section IV (1734–36). "I have long had an inclination to tell a fairy tale, the more wild and exotic the better; therefore a vision, which is confined to no rules of probability, will take in all the variety and luxuriancy of description you will; provided there be an apparent moral to it. I think one or two of the *Persian Tales* would give one hints for such an invention."—Letter to Mrs. Judith Cowper, September 26, 1723.

Notes signed "P." are by Pope; those signed "W." by Warburton.

(78) ODE ON SOLITUDE. "Written when I was not twelve years old."—Pope to Cromwell, July 17, 1709, in a letter containing the poem. Even if written so early, which is doubtful (for Pope's statements about the dates of his poems are not always trustworthy), it was doubtless revised later.

(79) PASTORALS. "Written at sixteen years of age."—P. "If we would copy nature, it may be useful to take this idea along with us, that pastoral is an image of what they call the Golden Age. So that we are not to describe our shepherds as shepherds at this day really are, but as they may be conceived then to have been, when the best of men followed the employment. . . . . Theocritus excells all others in nature and simplicity. . . . . Virgil, who copies Theocritus, refines upon his original; and in all points where judgment is principally concerned, he is much superior to his master. . . . . Of the following eclogues I shall only say that these four comprehend all the subjects which the critics upon Theocritus and Virgil will allow to be fit for pastoral; that they have as much variety of description, in respect of the several seasons, as Spenser's; that in order to add to this variety the several times of the day are observed, the rural employments in each season or time of day, and the rural scenes or places proper to such employments, not without some regard to the several ages of man and the different passions proper to each age."—P. "The author esteemed these as the most correct in the versification, and musical in the numbers, of all his works. The reason for his laboring them into so much softness was, doubtless, that this sort of poetry derives almost its whole beauty from a natural ease of thought and smoothness of verse."—P.

(79) *Spring*. In general plan the pastoral is modeled upon Virgil's third eclogue and Theocritus' fifth idyll, in which two shepherds contend in song before a third shepherd, praising their mistresses in alternate strains. ¶ 1, 2. Pope says that these lines are imitated from Virgil (*Eclogues*, vi. 1, 2.):

> Prima Syracusio dignata est ludere versu
> Nostra nec erubuit silvas habitare Thalia.
>
> I first transferred to Rome Sicilian strains;
> Nor blushed the Doric Muse to dwell on Mantuan plains.
> —Dryden's translation.

¶ 2. *Windsor's:* in his youth Pope lived at Binfield, near Windsor Forest. ¶ 4. *Sicilian Muses:* the Muses of pastoral poetry; Theocritus (of the third century B. C.), the father of pastoral poetry, lived and wrote in Sicily. ¶ 7–12. The person addressed was Sir William Trumbull, to whom the pastoral is inscribed. He had retired from the secretaryship of state in 1697, and was living at his native place, near Windsor, where the young poet made his acquaintance. ¶ 20. Cf. Dryden's "Palamon and Arcite" (I. 182): "Fresh as the month, and as the morning fair."

(80) 27. *Phosphor:* the morning-star (literally, "light-bringer"; Greek φῶς, light, and φόρος, bringer). ¶ 28. *purple:* "Purple is here used in the Latin sense of the brightest, most vivid coloring in general, not of that peculiar tint so called."—W. Cf. "ver purpureum" (Virgil's *Eclogues*, ix. 40). ¶ 32. *breathing*=exhaling odors. ¶ 35. *wanton*=playful, running hither and thither. ¶ 39, 40. "The shepherd's hesitation at the name of the Zodiac imitates that in Virgil [*Eclogues*, iii. 40, 41]:

> Et quis fuit alter,
> Descripsit radio totum qui gentibus orbem?"—P.

> And—what 's his name who made the sphere,
> And showed the seasons of the sliding year?
> —Dryden's translation.

¶ 41–43. "Literally from Virgil [*Eclogues*, iii. 59, 56, 57]:

> Alternis dicetis; amant alterna Camenae.
>
> Et nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbos;
> Nunc frondent silvae; nunc formosissimus annus."—P.

"By turns you will sing: the Muses love alternate songs." "And now every field, now every tree is budding forth; now the woods are in leaf; now the year is most beautiful." ¶ 46. *Waller's:* Edmund Waller (1606–87) was one of the first to write the pentameter couplet with the regularity and smoothness which so pleased the ear of Pope and his contemporaries. Cf. Dryden's statement: "But the excellence and dignity of it [rhyme] were never fully known till Mr. Waller taught it; he first made writing easily an art, first showed us to conclude the sense, most commonly, in distichs."—The Epistle Dedicatory to *The Rival Ladies* (1663). *Granville's:* George Granville, afterward Lord Lansdowne, Secretary of War under Queen Anne; a small poet and imitator of Waller. ¶ 47. 48. Pope says the lines are an imitation of Virgil (*Eclogues*, iii. 86, 87):

> Pascite taurum,
> Qui cornu petat, et pedibus jam spargat arenam.

"Breed a bull which attacks with his horn and scatters the sand with his hoofs." But the lines owe more to Dryden's translation of the *Æneid*, ix. 859, 862:

> A snow-white steer before thy altar led.
> And dares the fight, and spurns the yellow sands.

¶ 55, 56. Cf. Horace, *Odes*, I. ix. 21, 22:

> Nunc et latentis proditor intimo
> Gratus puellae risus ab angulo,

"And now the pleasing traitor laugh of the hiding girl, from a most secret corner." ¶ 57, 58. "Imitation of Virgil [*Eclogues*, iii. 64, 65]:

> Malo me Galatea petit, lasciva puella,
> Et fugit ad salices, et se cupit ante videri."—P.

> My Phillis me with pelted apples plies;
> Then, tripping to the woods, the wanton hies,
> And wishes to be seen before she flies.
> —Dryden's translation.

¶ 61. *Pactolus:* a river in Asia Minor, famous for the gold in its sandy bed. ¶ 62. When Phaeton was hurled from the chariot of the sun into the river Eridanus, which is usually identified with the Po, his sisters became poplars on its banks and their tears were turned to amber. ¶ 65. *Idalia's:* Idalia, a promontory on the island of Cyprus, was sacred to Venus. ¶ 66. *Cynthus:* a mountain in the island of Delos, the birthplace of Diana. *Hybla:* a city in Sicily, one of the seats of the worship of Ceres.

(81) 85–92. "The two riddles are in imitation of those in Virgil [*Eclogues*, iii. 104–7]."—P. ¶ 86. *A wondrous tree:* "An allusion to the royal oak, in which Charles II had been

hid from the pursuit after the battle of Worcester."—P. ¶ 90. "Alludes to the device of the Scots' monarchs, the thistle, worn by Queen Anne, and to the arms of France, the *fleur de lys*."—P. ¶ 102. *Pleiads:* the constellation of the Pleiades was supposed to bring rain.

(81) WINDSOR FOREST. Lines 7–42, 111–46. ¶ 2. An allusion to *Paradise Lost*.

(82) 7. Cf. Waller, "On Her Passing through a Crowd of People" (1645), ll. 1, 2:

> As in old chaos (heaven with earth confused,
> And stars with rocks together crushed and bruised).

¶ 21. *tufted trees:* cf. Milton's "L'Allegro," l. 78, "Bosomed high in tufted trees."

(83) 45. *moist Arcturus:* the brightest star in the Great Dipper; it was supposed to bring storms. ¶ 53. *doves:* probably the subject, not the object, of "o'ershade." ¶ 55. Cf. Dryden's translation of Virgil's *Georgics*. ii. 774: "And bends his bow, and levels with his eyes." ¶ 60. John Philips' "*Cider*" (1708), II. 175, 176:

> They leave their little lives
> Above the clouds, precipitant to earth.

Philips' lines in turn are based on Virgil's *Georgics*, iii. 547, "Praecipites alta vitam sub nube relinquunt," "Falling headlong, they leave life under the lofty cloud." ¶ 68. *Tyrian dye:* the so-called Tyrian purple, made by the ancient Tyrians from the juice of a shell-fish; it is supposed to have been nearer crimson than purple. ¶ 69. *volumes*=folds, coils (Latin "volvere," to roll). ¶ 70. *bedropped with gold:* cf. the description of fish in *Paradise Lost*, VII. 406, "Show to the sun their waved coats dropt with gold."

(83) AN ESSAY ON CRITICISM. Lines 68–168, 215–52, 289–383. ¶ 1–6. Cf. Lord Shaftesbury's *Advice to an Author* (1710), Part III, sec. 3: "Whatever philosopher, critic or author is convinced of this prerogative of Nature, will easily be persuaded to apply himself to the great work of reforming his taste, which he will have reason to suspect if he be not such a one as has deliberately endeavored to frame it by the just standard of Nature."

(84) 13, 14. In the first line, "wit" means imagination, fancy; in the second line, judgment. ¶ 19. *gen'rous*=of good stock, thoroughbred (Latin "genus," race, stock). ¶ 42. *bills*=prescriptions.

(85) 52–54. Pope here applies to the art of criticism what Boileau, in his "L'Art poétique" (1674), III. 112–14, says to writers of tragedies:

> Conservez à chacun son propre caractère;
> Des siècles, des pays étudiez les mœurs:
> Les climats font souvent les diverses humeurs.

In Soame and Dryden's translation, which Pope probably used, the lines are thus rendered:

> Keep to each man his proper character;
> Of countries and of times the humours know;
> From diff'rent climates diff'ring customs grow.

¶ 57, 58. Cf. Horace, *De arte poetica*, l. 268, 269:

> Vos exemplaria Graeca
> Nocturna versate manu, versate diurna,

"Turn over Greek models with nightly and with daily hand." ¶ 62. *the Mantuan Muse:* Virgil who was born near Mantua. ¶ 63–71. "It is a tradition preserved by Servius that Virgil began with writing a poem of the Alban and Roman affairs, which he found above his years, and descended, first to imitate Theocritus on rural subjects, and afterward to copy Homer in heroic poetry."—P. ¶ 63. *Maro:* Virgil's full name was Publius Virgilius Maro. ¶ 71. *the Stagyrite:* Aristotle (384–322 B. C.), who was born at Stagira, Macedonia; his *Poetics*, in which literary principles are derived from an analysis of Greek poetry, laid the foundation of literary criticism. ¶ 75. *a happiness as well as care:* Pope evidently had in mind the famous phrase used by Petronius of Horace's poetry, "curiosa felicitas," "the felicity which comes from carefulness," although he is not here speaking of that kind of happiness in style. ¶ 79–82. Pope compares Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory*, II. xiii: "Neque enim rogationibus

plebisve scitis sancta sunt ista praecepta, sed hoc, quicquid est, utilitas excogitavit. Non negabo autem sic utile esse plerumque . . . ; verum si eadem illa nobis aliud suadebit utilitas, hanc, relictis magistrorum auctoritatibus, sequemur," "For the precepts of oratory are not established by laws or public decrees, but whatever is contained in them was discovered by expediency. Yet I shall not deny that it is in general of service to attend to rules . . . . ; but if expediency shall suggest anything at variance with them, we shall have to follow it, deserting the authority of teachers."—J. S. Watson's translation. ¶ 85. 86. Cf. Boileau's "L'Art poétique" (1674), II. 71, 72; IV. 77–80:

Son style impétueux souvent marche au hasard:
Chez elle un beau désordre est un effet de l'art.

C'est lui qui vous dira par quel transport heureux
Quelquefois dans sa course un esprit vigoureux,
Trop resserré par l'art, sort des règles prescrites,
Et de l'art même apprend à franchir leurs limites.

Soame and Dryden translate thus:

Her gen'rous style at random oft will part,
And by a brave disorder shows her art.

'T is he will tell you to what noble height
A gen'rous Muse may sometimes take her flight;
When too much fettered with the rules of art,
May from her stricter bounds and limits part.

(86) 92. *gloriously offend:* cf. Dryden, *Aurengzebe*, IV. i, "Mean soul! and dar'st not gloriously offend!" ¶ 103. *Pierian:* Pieria, a mountain in Greece, was the legendary birthplace and haunt of the Muses. ¶ 112–19. Cf. Drummond's "Hymn of the Fairest Fair," ll. 149–56, in *Flowers of Sion* (1623):

Ah, as a pilgrim who the Alps doth pass,
Or Atlas' temples crowned with winter's glass,
The airy Caucasus, the Apennine,
Pyrene's cliffs where sun doth never shine,
When he some heaps of hills hath overwent,
Begins to think on rest, his journey spent,
Till, mounting some tall mountain, he doth find
More heights before him than he left behind.

¶ 120–25. Pope compares Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory*, X. i: "Legendus est . . . diligenter, ac paene ad scribendi sollicitudinem: nec per partes modo scrutanda omnia, sed perlectus liber utique ex integro resumendus." "They must be read with attention, and indeed with almost as much care as if we were transcribing them: and every portion must be examined, not merely partially, but a whole book, when read through, must be taken up afresh."—J. S. Watson's translation. ¶ 126–29. Cf. Boileau's "L'Art poétique" (1674), I. 71, 72:

Un style trop égal et toujours uniforme
En vain brille à nos yeux, il faut qu'il nous endorme;

and Soame and Dryden's translation:

A frozen style that neither ebbs nor flows,
Instead of pleasing makes us gape and doze.

(87) 140. *conceipt:* here used in the sense of far-fetched and too ingenious conceptions or fancies, such as Donne and the other "metaphysical" poets delighted in. ¶ 148, 149. Cf. Boileau: "Un bon mot n'est bon mot qu'en ce qu'il dit une chose que chacun pensoit, et qu' il la dit d'une manière vive, fine, et nouvelle," "A witty saying is not a witty saying except as it expresses a thing that everyone thinks, and expresses it in a manner that is animated, ingenious, and new." ¶ 148. *True wit:* "wit" here means imaginative insight expressed in words. ¶ 154. *wit:* the word here cannot mean "true wit," which Pope has just defined as "nature to advantage dressed" (l. 148), for a work cannot have too much of that; the reference evidently is to fancy and imagination strained into unnatural and unfit forms, as far-

fetched conceits, too ingenious resemblances, etc.; cf. ll. 140–43. ¶ 159. *upon content*= upon trust.

(88) 170. *decent*=becoming, attractive. ¶ 179. *Fungoso:* a character in Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of His Humour*. ¶ 196. *open vowels:* vowels that "open," or gape, on each other, with no consonant between; cf. the modern term "hiatus" (Latin "hiare," to gape). ¶ 207. *Alexandrine:* a line of six iambic feet; supposed to be so called from an old French romance, in that meter, about Alexander the Great.

(89) 211. *praise:* in the imperative mood and co-ordinate with "leave" (l. 209), not with "know." ¶ 212. Cf. note on "Spring," l. 46 (p. 444). ¶ 217–24. Cf. Vida's *De arte poetica* (1537), III. 365–68, 388–99, 394–96, 415–17:

> Haud satis est illis utcunque claudere versum,
> Et res verborum propria vi reddere claras:
> Omnia sed numeris vocum concordibus aptant,
> Atque sono quaecunque canunt imitantur.
>
> Tunc longe sale saxa sonant, tunc et freta ventis
> Incipiunt agitata tumescere: littore fluctus
> Illidunt rauco.
>
> Cum vero ex alto speculatus caerula Nereus
> Leniit in morem stagni placidaeque paludis,
> Labitur uncta vadis abies, natat uncta carina.
>
> Atque adeo, siquid geritur molimine magno,
> Adde moram, et pariter tecum quoque verba laborent
> Segnia.

"It is not enough for them to close the verse in whatever way happens, and to make things clear by words of suitable meaning; but they fit all things to appropriate measures of words, and imitate in sound whatever things they sing." "Then from afar the rocks resound to the sea, and the straits, troubled by the winds, begin to rise; the billows dash against the hoarse shore." "But when blue Nereus, gazing from the deep, calms it to the semblance of a quiet, placid pool, the ship glides smoothly over the waves, and smoothly swims the keel." "And moreover, if you are concerned with some great mass, make delay, and in like degree with your thought let your slow words also labor." ¶ 221, 222. In the *Iliad*, vii. 268, 269, and xii. 383–85, Ajax is described as throwing stones; but the verse is not labored, either in the original or in Pope's translation. ¶ 223. *Camilla:* a maiden-warrior, very fleet of foot, described in the *Æneid*, vii. 803 ff. ¶ 225. See Dryden's "Alexander's Feast" (p. 53).

(89) THE RAPE OF THE LOCK. The first edition, published in 1712, consisted of only two cantos, containing 334 lines. In the second version the poem was expanded to 794 lines, chiefly by the addition of the description of the game of cards and the "machinery" of the sylphs and gnomes. "The first sketch of this poem was written in less than a fortnight's time, in 1711."—P. "Mr. Caryll . . . . originally proposed the subject to him, in a view of putting an end, by this piece of ridicule, to a quarrel that was risen between two noble families, those of Lord Petre and of Mrs. Fermor, on the trifling occasion of his having cut off a lock of her hair."—W. "The stealing of Miss Belle Fermor's hair was taken too seriously, and caused an estrangement between the two families, though they had lived so long in great friendship before. A common acquaintance and well-wisher to both desired me to write a poem to make a jest of it, and laugh them together again. It was with this view that I wrote 'The Rape of the Lock.' . . . . The machinery was added afterwards, to make it look a little more considerable."—P., quoted in Spence's *Anecdotes*, Section V (1737–39). Pope dedicated the second version to Miss Fermor, "as a piece of justice in return to the wrong interpretations she has suffered under on the score of that piece" (letter to Caryll, December 15, 1713); the dedication is in part as follows: "It was intended only to divert a few young ladies, who have good sense and good humor enough to laugh not only at their

sex's little unguarded follies but at their own. . . . . The machinery, madam, is a term invented by the critics to signify that part which the deities, angels, or demons are made to act in a poem. . . . . These machines I determined to raise on a very new and odd foundation, the Rosicrucian doctrine of spirits. . . . . According to these gentlemen the four elements are inhabited by spirits, which they call sylphs, gnomes, nymphs, and salamanders. The gnomes, or demons of earth, delight in mischief; but the sylphs, whose habitation is in the air, are the best conditioned creatures imaginable. . . . . The human persons are as fictitious as the airy ones; and the character of Belinda, as it is now managed, resembles you in nothing but in beauty."

(89) *Canto I.*

(90) 12. Cf. the *Æneid*, i. 11: "Tantaene animis caelestibus irae?" "Can such wrath be in celestial minds?" ¶ 17. When the hand-bell (which was the only kind then used for summoning servants) was not answered, ladies were accustomed to knock with a slipper. ¶ 18. "Repeater" watches, when a spring is pressed, strike the last hour, and thus save languid belles the exertion of looking at the watch. ¶ 19–148. Added in the second version. ¶ 23. *a birth-night beau:* at the court balls in honor of the birthdays of the king, queen, and other members of the royal family, the costumes were unusually brilliant. ¶ 32. *silver token:* the silver coin that fairies used to put overnight in the shoes of tidy house-maids. *the circled green:* "Their [the fairies'] diversion was dancing hand-in-hand in a circle; and the traces of their tiny feet, which were held to be visible on the grass long afterwards, were called fairy rings."—Brand's *Popular Antiquities.* ¶ 44. *the box:* i. e., at the theater. *the Ring:* a circular drive in Hyde Park. ¶ 46. *a chair:* a sedan chair, a vehicle much used at this period, especially by ladies; it was closed on all sides, and was borne by two men.

(91) 55, 56. Pope compares the *Æneid*, vi. 653–55:

> Quae gratia curruum
> Armorumque fuit vivis, quae cura nitentis
> Pascere equos, eadem sequitur tellure repostos.

Cf. also Dryden's translation of the lines:

> The love of horses which they had alive,
> And care of chariots, after death survive.

¶ 56. *ombre:* a game at cards. ¶ 57–66. Elwin says that in the doctrines of the Rosicrucians the moral and mental natures of the sylphs, gnomes, nymphs, and salamanders "are not, as in 'The Rape of the Lock,' the counterpart of their corporeal qualities, and they are a race of beings distinct from man, and not deceased mortals, as with Pope, who was indebted for this circumstance to the account of the fairy train in Dryden's 'Flower and Leaf' [ll. 482, 483]:

> And all those airy shapes you now behold
> Were human bodies once, and clothed with earthly mould."

¶ 69, 70. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, I. 423, 424:

> For spirits, when they please,
> Can either sex assume, or both.

¶ 81. "These" refers to the gnomes; "their," to the nymphs. ¶ 85 *garters, stars:* the insignia of the Knights of the Garter, the highest order of knighthood in England. *coronets:* lords and ladies may wear coronets, although only kings and queens may wear crowns.

(92) 105. *thy protection claim:* i. e., claim the right or privilege to protect thee. ¶ 108. "The language of the Platonists, the writers of the intelligible world of spirits."—P. ¶ 127. *Th' inferior priestess:* Belinda's maid, the Betty of l. 148.

(93) *Canto II.* ¶ 4–46. In the first draft; all the rest of the canto was added in the second version.

(94) 45, 46. Pope compares the *Æneid*, xi. 794, 795:

> Audiit et voti Phoebus succedere partem
> Mente dedit, partem volucris dispersit in auras.

Cf. Dryden's rendering of the lines:

> Apollo heard, and, granting half his prayer,
> Shuffled in winds the rest, and tossed in empty air.

Cf. also the *Iliad*, xvi. 249, 250. ¶ 64. "The gossamer, which is spun in autumn by a species of spider, ... was formerly supposed to be the product of sunburnt dew."—Elwin.

(95) 73. *sylphids:* "sylphid" is a diminutive of "sylph"; but the word may be used here (like the French "sylphide") for female sylphs. ¶ 79. *wand'ring orbs:* comets.

(96) 113. *drops:* ear-drops, set with brilliants. ¶ 115. *Crispissa:* from "crisp," to curl. ¶ 132. *rivelled*=shrivelled. ¶ 133. *Ixion:* a fabulous Greek king, father of the Centaurs, who for his boasting of Hera's supposed love for him was fastened to a revolving wheel in Hades. ¶ 134. *mill:* "Chocolate was made in a kind of mill."—Croker.

(96) *Canto III.* ¶ 3. *a structure:* Hampton Court, a royal palace, some twelve miles from London, built by Cardinal Wolsey.

(97) 25–104. Added in the second version. ¶ 27. *ombre:* "Ombre was invented in Spain, and owed its name to the phrase which was to be used by the person who undertook to stand the game—'Yo soy l'hombre,' 'I am the man.' "—Elwin. *singly:* the game was usually played by three persons, one pitted against the other two. ¶ 30. Nine cards were dealt to each player. ¶ 33. *Matadore:* "From the Spanish 'matador,' a murderer, because the matadors in ombre were the three best cards and the slayers of all that came into competition with them."—Elwin. ¶ 43. *parti-coloured*=variegated.

(98) 47. "The whole idea of this description of a game at ombre is taken from Vida's description of a game at chess in his poem intitled 'Scacchia Ludus.' "—W. "Pope not only borrowed the general conception of representing the game under the guise of a battle, but he has imitated particular passages of his Latin prototype."—Elwin. ¶ 49. *Spadillio:* "From Espadilla,' the Spanish term for the ace of spades."—Elwin. ¶ 51. *Manillio:* "The second in power of the three Matadores."—Elwin. ¶ 53. *Basto:* "The Spanish name for the ace of clubs."—Elwin. ¶ 61. *Pam:* the knave of clubs; the highest in the game of loo.

(99) 92. *codille:* "If either of the antagonists made more tricks than the ombre, the winner took the pool, and the ombre had to replace it for the next game; this was called codille."—Elwin. ¶ 106. *berries:* coffee berries. ¶ 122. *Scylla:* daughter of Nisus, king of Megara, in Greece; she fell in love with Minos, leader of the Cretans who were warring upon Nisus, and gave him the purple lock of her father's hair on which depended the safety of Megara; as a punishment she was turned into a bird.

(100) 135–46. Added in the second version. ¶ 150. *fondly*=foolishly; but there seems to be also the idea of affectionate devotion to Belinda. ¶ 152. "See Milton, Lib. VI. 330. of Satan cut asunder by the angel Michael."—P. The lines cited are these:

> But the ethereal substance closed,
> Not long divisible.

¶ 165. *'Atalantis':* a scandalous novel, by Mrs. Manley, published in 1709. ¶ 166. *the small pillow:* "Ladies in those days sometimes received visits in their bed-chambers, when the bed was covered with a richer counterpane, and 'graced' by a small pillow with a worked case and lace edging."—Croker. Cf. *The Spectator*, No. 45.

(101) 171. *date:* i. e., last date, ending. ¶ 172. Cf. Juvenal, x. 146. "Quandoquidem data sunt ipsis quoque fata sepulchris," "Since fates are given also to the graves themselves." ¶ 173–78. Pope compares Catullus, lxvi. 43–47:

> Ille quoque eversus mons est, quem maximum in orbi
> Progenies Thiae clara supervehitur,
> Cum Medi peperere novom mare, cumque juventus
> Per medium classi barbara navit Athon.
> Quid facient crines, cum ferro talia cedant?

"That mountain, also, which the bright offspring of Thia passes over greatest upon earth, was overturned, when the Medes created a new sea and the barbarian youth sailed with their

fleet through the midst of Athos. What shall hair do, when such things yield to iron?" ¶ 178. *unresisted*=irresistible.

(101) *Canto IV.* Cf. the descent of Ulysses (*Odyssey*, xi) and of Æneas (*Æneid*, vi) into Hades. ¶ 1, 2. Pope compares the *Æneid*, iv. 1, 2:

> At regina gravi jamdudum saucia cura
> Volnus alit venis, et caeco carpitur igni.

Cf. Dryden's translation:

> But anxious cares already seized the queen;
> She fed within her veins a flame unseen.

¶ 11–93. Added in the second version. ¶ 13. *Umbriel:* diminutive from Latin "umbria," shadow. ¶ 20. *The dreaded east:* the east wind was thought to cause spleen. ¶ 24. *Megrim* =low spirits, the "blues"; also, resulting whims.

(102) 38. *night-dress:* the modern dressing-gown. *gives a new disease:* i. e., is the occasion of affecting to be ill, when the new gown may be displayed to the doctor and sympathetic friends; cf. l. 36. ¶ 43. *spires*=coils. ¶ 46. *angels in machines:* angels coming to the aid of mortals. In ancient Greek and Latin plays, when the plot had reached a crisis where human power was helpless, a god descended by means of a stage device, or "machine," and extricated the characters from their troubles. ¶ 51. *Homer's tripod:* "See Hom. *Iliad*, xviii, of Vulcan's walking tripods."—P. ¶ 52. *a goose-pie talks:* "Alludes to a real fact; a lady of distinction imagined herself in this condition."—P. ¶ 59. *vapours*=depression of spirits, the "blues." "The disease was probably named from the atmospheric vapors which were reputed to be a principal cause of English melancholy."—Elwin.

(103) 82. See the *Odyssey*, x. ¶ 102. *loads of lead:* "The curl-papers of ladies' hair used to be fastened with strips of pliant lead."—Croker.

(104) 117. *Hyde Park Circus:* see note on Canto I. 44 (p. 448). ¶ 118. The church of St. Mary-le-Bow stood in the center of the business part of the city, where the "wits" and fine gentlemen would scorn to live. ¶ 121. *Sir Plume:* the original was Sir George Brown, brother of "Thalestris." "Nobody but Sir George Brown was angry, and he was a good deal so and for a long time. He could not bear that Sir Plume should talk nothing but nonsense." —P., as quoted in Spence's *Anecdotes*, Section V (1737–39). Spence adds, "I have been assured by a most intimate friend of Mr. Pope's . . . . that what was said of Sir George Brown in it was the very picture of the man." ¶ 124. *clouded*=covered with spots darker than the rest of the wood; cf. *The Tatler*, No. 103. ¶ 133–36. "In allusion to Achilles' oath in Homer, *Il.* [233–37]."—P. ¶ 137. Cf. Dryden's translation of the *Iliad*, i. 88: "That while my nostrils draw this vital air." ¶ 141, 142. Added in the second version. ¶ 149, 150. Cf. the *Æneid*, iv. 657, 658:

> Felix heu nimium felix, si litora tantum
> Nunquam Dardaniae tetigissent nostra carinae.

"Happy, alas too happy, if only the Dardanian keels had never touched our shores."

(105) *Canto V.* ¶ 2. Cf. the *Æneid*, iv. 440, "Fata obstant, placidasque viri deus obstruit auris"; and Dryden's translation, "Fate and the gods had stopped his ears to love." ¶ 5. *the Trojan:* Æneas; obedient to the command of Jupiter, he prepared to leave Carthage in spite of the frantic grief of Dido and the entreaties of her sister Anna; see the *Æneid*, iv. 416–49. ¶ 7–36. Added in the edition of 1717. ¶ 7. *Clarissa:* "a new character introduced in the subsequent editions, to open more clearly the moral of the poem, in a parody of the speech of Sarpedon to Glaucus in Homer [*Iliad*, xii. 310 ff.]."—P.

(106) 45. "Homer, *Il.*, xx."—P. ¶ 53–56. Added in the second version. ¶ 53. *sconce's:* a sconce is a bracket-candlestick. "Minerva in like manner, during the battle of Ulysses with the suitors in the *Odyssey*, perches on a beam of the roof to behold it."—P.

(107) 64. "*Those eyes are made so killing*": "The words of a song in the opera of *Camilla*."—P. ¶ 65. Pope compares Ovid, *Epistles*, vii. 1, 2:

Sic ubi fata vocant, udis abjectus in herbis,
Ad vada Maeandri concinit albus olor,

"So when the fates call, the white swan sings by the streams of Maeander, lying helpless in the damp grass." ¶ 83, 84. Added in the second version. ¶ 89–96. "In imitation of the progress of Agamemnon's sceptre in Homer, *Il.*, ii [101–9]."—P.

(108) 113, 114. "Vide Ariosto, Canto XXXIV."—P. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, III. 440–59. ¶ 115. *heroes' wits:* among the things in the lunar limbo of Ariosto's poem are the wits of Orlando, the distracted hero. ¶ 129. *Berenice's locks:* Berenice, wife of one of the Egyptian kings, dedicated her hair to the gods for the safe return of her husband from a military expedition, and an astronomer reported that the hair had been transformed into the constellation "Coma Berenices." ¶ 131, 132. Added in the second version. ¶ 133. *the Mall:* a promenade in St. James's Park, London, much frequented by the fashionable world; bands of music apparently played there. ¶ 136. *Rosamonda's lake:* a small body of water in St. James's Park. ¶ 137. *Partridge:* "John Partridge was a ridiculous star-gazer, who in his almanacs every year never failed to predict the downfall of the Pope and the King of France, then at war with the English."—P. ¶ 138. *Galileo's eyes:* the telescope.

(109) TRANSLATIONS FROM HOMER. *Iliad*, i. 640–61. Cf. Dryden's translation of the same passage, on p. 60.

(109) ELOISA TO ABELARD. Lines 1–58, 207–48, 277–302. Peter Abelard (1079–1142), of a noble French family, early came to great distinction as a lecturer upon divinity; thousands crowded to hear him in Paris and elsewhere, and his lectures largely determined for centuries the method of scholastic theology. In the midst of this brilliant career, at the age of thirty-six, he fell in love with a beautiful and intellectual girl of eighteen, Heloise, who it is said knew Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; he became her tutor, and soon won her passionate love. When the illicit connection became known to her uncle, Abelard consented to marry her on condition that the marriage should be kept secret; the uncle, however, soon revealed it, and the lovers parted, Heloise becoming a nun and Abelard a monk. Years after, according to tradition, Abelard wrote a letter to a friend in distress and sought to console him by telling the story of his own greater sorrows; the letter in some way reached Heloise, and drew from her a letter to Abelard—the basis of Pope's poem. There is doubt as to the authenticity of the letters, although they have generally been considered genuine. The originals were written in Latin. In 1693 a garbled French translation was published; and in 1714 the French version was translated into English. Pope follows the English translation.

(110) 20. Cf. Milton's *Comus*, l. 429, "By grots and caverns shagged with horrid shades." ¶ 22. *weep:* a reference to the moisture which collects upon stone in damp air. ¶ 24. *forgot myself to stone:* cf. Milton's "Il Penseroso," l. 42, "Forget thyself to marble." ¶ 36. Cf. John Pomfret's "Love Triumphant over Reason" (1699), l. 213, "Which breeds such sad variety of woe."

(111) 64. "Taken from Crashaw."—P. Line 16 in Crashaw's "Description of a Religious House and Condition of Life" (1646).

(112) 101–14. A comparison with the corresponding passage in the English translation will show something of Pope's manner of handling his original: "I am a miserable sinner prostrate before my judge, and with my face pressed to the earth I mix my tears and sighs in the dust when the beams of grace and reason enlighten me. Come, see me in this posture and solicit me to love you! Come, if you think fit, and in your holy habit thrust yourself between God and me, and be a wall of separation! Come and force from me those sighs, thoughts, and vows which I owe to Him only! Assist the evil spirits, and be the instrument of their malice! But rather withdraw yourself, and contribute to my salvation. . . . . Let me remove far from you, and obey the apostle, who hath said, 'Fly!'"

(113) THE DUNCIAD. Book I. "Dunciad" means "a poem about dunces"; the word is made on the analogy of "Iliad," "a poem about Ilium." ¶ 1. *The mighty mother:* Dulness. *her son:* in the first editions, he was Lewis Theobald, a contemporary poor poet and an editor of Shakspere, who had offended Pope by his *Shakespeare Restored, or an Exposure of the Blunders Committed and Unamended in Mr. Pope's Late Edition* (1726); in the edition of 1743, Colley Cibber, the actor and playwright, who had infuriated Pope by publishing an attack upon him, was substituted for Theobald. ¶ 2. *The Smithfield Muses:* "Smithfield is the place where Bartholomew Fair was kept, whose shows, machines, and dramatical entertainments, formerly agreeable only to the taste of the rabble, were, by the hero of this poem and others of equal genius, brought to the theatres of Covent Garden, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and the Haymarket, to be the reigning pleasures of the court and town."—P. ¶ 6. "Alluding to a verse of Mr. Dryden . . . . in his verses to Mr. Congreve: 'And Tom the second reigns like Tom the first.' "—P. See p. 52. ¶ 10. *Pallas:* the propriety of the allusion to Pallas, goddess of wisdom (who sprang completely armed from the head of Zeus), is obvious in connection with this reference to the preceding reign of Dulness. ¶ 20. Swift was dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin; the author of *The Drapier's Letters;* of the "Bickerstaff" pamphlets, exposing the quack astrologer, John Partridge; and of *Gulliver's Travels.* ¶ 21. *Cervantes' serious air:* Cervantes, the great Spanish novelist, in his *Don Quixote* (1605, 1615) ridiculed the old romances of chivalry with much seeming gravity; Pope alludes to the similar grave irony of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels.* ¶ 22. *Rab'lais' easy chair:* François Rabelais, the French humorist, in his *Pantagruel* (1533) and *Gargantua* (1535) satirized church and society in his day with coarse, rollicking humor. "By 'Rabelais' easy chair' he means the broader (as compared with Cervantes) humor in the *Tale of a Tub,* which led Voltaire, as Warton says, to call Swift 'Rabelais in his senses.' "—Courthope. ¶ 23. *Or praise the court, or magnify mankind:* "*Ironice,* alluding to Gulliver's representations of both."—P. ¶ 24. "Relates to the papers of the drapier against the currency of Wood's copper coin in Ireland, which, upon the great discontent of the people, his Majesty was graciously pleased to recall."—P. ¶ 25. *thy Boeotia:* Ireland. Boeotia was considered the dullest, least cultured district of Greece, and so the English esteemed Ireland in Pope's day. *her:* refers to Dulness; cf. ll. 16, 17. ¶ 28. *a new Saturnian Age of Lead:* "The ancient Golden Age is by poets styled Saturnian, as being under the reign of Saturn; but in the chemical language Saturn is lead."—P. ¶ 29. *those walls:* Bedlam Hospital for lunatics, London. ¶ 30. *Monroe:* a doctor in the hospital. ¶ 31. *his famed father's hand:* "Mr. Caius Gabriel Cibber, father of the poet laureate; the two statues of the lunatics over the gates of Bedlam Hospital were done by him, and (as the son justly says of them) are no ill monuments of his fame as an artist."—P. and W.

(114) 37. *Proteus:* a sea-god, son of Oceanus; when seized, he would try to escape by changing himself into a lion, a dragon, and other monstrous forms. ¶ 40. *Curll's . . . . Lintot's:* "Two booksellers. . . . The former was fined by the Court of King's Bench for publishing obscene books; the latter usually adorned his shop with titles in red letters."—P. *post:* the sign-post in front of the shop; advertisements of books were pasted on it. ¶ 41. "It is an ancient English custom for the malefactors to sing a psalm at their execution at Tyburn; and no less customary to print elegies on their deaths, at the same time or before."—P. ¶ 44. *New Year odes:* "Made by the poet laureate for the time being [Cibber], to be sung at court on every New Year's Day, the words of which are happily drowned in the voices and instruments."—P. and W. *Grub Street:* the abode of many poor poets and hack-writers. ¶ 48. *loss of ears:* political and other offenders were often punished by having their ears cropped. ¶ 50. Cf. Matt. 5:6. ¶ 57. *Jacob:* Jacob Tonson, a bookseller and publisher. *third day:* the author received the profits of the third performance of his play. ¶ 63. *clenches* = puns.

(115) 85. **: in the earlier editions "Thorold," the name of the Lord Mayor in 1720, stood here. ¶ 86. "The procession of a Lord Mayor is made partly by land and partly by water. Cimon, the famous Athenian general, obtained a victory by sea and another by land,

on the same day, over the Persians and barbarians."—P. ¶ 90. *Settle's:* Settle was poet to the city of London; his office was to compose yearly panegyrics upon the Lord Mayors and verses to be spoken in the pageants."—P. Cf. Dryden's lines upon him, as Doeg, on p. 28. ¶ 91. *shrieves*=sheriffs. ¶ 95. *Queen:* Dulness. ¶ 98. *Heywood's:* "John Heywood, whose interludes were printed in the time of Henry VIII."—P. It was Thomas Heywood, the dramatist, contemporary with Shakspere, who was city poet, and neither he nor John Heywood was dull. ¶ 101, 102. It was long a popular belief that bear cubs were born shapeless and had to be licked into form by the mother. ¶ 103. *Prynne:* William Prynne, a writer of doggerel verses, was sentenced to the pillory in 1632 and had both ears cut off. *Daniel:* Daniel Defoe, whose verse is far below the level of his prose, was also pilloried, in 1703. ¶ 104. *Eusden:* Lawrence Eusden, a very minor poet, was made poet laureate in 1718. *Blackmore's endless line:* Sir Richard Blackmore (1658?–1729), a physician, wrote several long epics, composing them in part while he was driving in his gig from patient to patient. ¶ 105. *slow Philips:* Ambrose Philips' "Pastorals," which appeared in the same year as Pope's and were by some preferred to his, excited the jealousy of Pope and made him Philips' enemy; "slow" means slow in composition (cf. "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," ll. 179–82, p. 125). *Tate's poor page:* i. e., a page to Tate. "Nahum Tate [1652–1715] was poet laureate, a cold writer, of no invention."—P. ¶ 106. *Dennis:* John Dennis (1657–1734), a poor playwright and literary critic; he was a man of violent temper, verging almost on madness. ¶ 108. *Bayes's:* Cibber is called Bayes because he was poet laureate and (metaphorically) wore the bays, the fruit of the laurel.

(116) 126. *sooterkins*=abortions. ¶ 131. *Fletcher's:* Cibber borrowed liberally from John Fletcher, the Elizabethan dramatist. ¶ 132. *frippery of crucified Molière:* i. e., Cibber made frippery of Molière's work when he adapted it, as in his *Non-Juror* based on Molière's *Tartuffe*. ¶ 133. Theobald (pronounced "Tibbald") had amended the text of Shakspere, sometimes for the better and sometimes for the worse, in his *Shakespeare Restored;* see note on l. 1. ¶ 134. Cf. the statement by Heminge and Condell, the editors of the first folio edition of Shakspere: "And what he thought, he uttered with that easinesse that wee have scarce received from him a blot in his papers." ¶ 135. *The rest:* the rest of the books in Cibber's library. ¶ 138. *their fond parents:* the authors. ¶ 140. *Quarles:* Francis Quarles (1592–1644) whose mediocre poems were illustrated by fine engravings. ¶ 141. *Ogilby:* John Ogilby's translation of the *Iliad* (1660) and the *Odyssey* (1665) were printed on extra fine paper, with plates by distinguished engravers. ¶ 142. *Newcastle:* Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle (died 1674). "Langbaine reckons up eight folios of her Grace's; which were usually adorned with gilded covers, and had her coat of arms upon them."—P. ¶ 143. *his suff'ring brotherhood:* the works of poor poets like Cibber himself. ¶ 146. *Settle, Banks, and Broome:* "The poet has mentioned these three authors in particular, as they are parallel to our hero in his three capacities: 1. Settle was his brother laureate, only indeed upon half-pay, for the city instead of the court, but equally famous for unintelligible flights in his poems on public occasions, such as shows, birthdays, etc.; 2. Banks was his rival in tragedy (though more successful) in one of his tragedies, *The Earl of Essex*, which is yet alive; . . . . 3. Broome was a serving-man of Ben Jonson, who once picked up a comedy from his betters, or from some cast scenes of his master, not entirely contemptible."—P. and W. ¶ 147. *more solid learning:* this part of the description, which was appropriate when the hero was Theobald, a pedant and scholar, lost its point when Cibber was substituted. ¶ 148. Cf. Pope's note on Caxton and Wynkyn (next line): "A printer in the time of Edw. IV, Rich. III, and Henry VII; Wynkyn de Word, his successor, in that of Hen. VII and VIII. The former translated into prose Virgil's *Æneis*, as a history, of which he speaks, in his Proeme, in a very singular manner, as of a book hardly known." ¶ 153. *De Lyra:* "Nich. de Lyra, or Harpsfield [1519?–75], a very voluminous commentator."—P. ¶ 154. *Philemon:* Philemon Holland (died 1636), a translator.

(117) 156. *defrauded pies:* it was formerly the custom of cooks to put leaves of old

books under their pies. ¶ 158. *hecatomb*=a sacrifice of many victims (Greek ἑκατόμβη= ἑκατόν, hundred, and βοῦς, ox). ¶ 159. *Commonplace:* a book in which passages from authors, etc., are copied and indexed for future use; Pope thus implies that all Cibber's works are based on his borrowings. ¶ 167. "The first visible cause of the passion of the town for our hero was a fair flaxen full-bottomed periwig, which, he tells us, he wore in his first play of *The Fool of Fashion*."—P. and W. ¶ 168. *the butt and bays:* the poet laureate was formerly awarded a yearly butt of sack, and a laurel wreath with its berries, or bays. ¶ 169. A poet's fling at mercantile affairs, which were looked down upon by the "wits" of the age. ¶ 170–72. A bias, in bowling, is a greater bulging, or (as here) a greater weight, on one side of a bowl, which makes the bowl curve instead of going in a straight line; if the bowler is skilful, this curving course is the surer, because it is not subject to accidental deviations due to inequalities in the alley. ¶ 188. *once betrayed me into common sense:* in his play, *The Careless Husband*, which Pope had praised in print; see p. 143, l. 24.

(118) 202. *box:* dice-box. ¶ 203. *White's:* a London chocolate house, the rendezvous of gambling sharpers and their victims. *the doctors:* "False dice, a cant phrase used amongst gamesters; so the meaning of these four sonorous lines is only this, 'Shall I play fair or foul?' "—P. and W. ¶ 208. *Ridpath . . . . Mist:* "George Ridpath, author of a Whig paper, called the *Flying Post:* Nathaniel Mist, of a famous Tory journal."—P. ¶ 209. *Curtius:* a hero of Roman legend; when an earthquake had opened a fissure in the Forum, and the soothsayers declared it could be closed only by the sacrifice of Rome's greatest treasure, Curtius, armed and on horseback, saying that Rome had no greater treasure than a Roman warrior, leaped into the abyss, which closed over him. ¶ 211. According to legend, when Rome was attacked by the Gauls, in 390 B. C., and a band of them had climbed up the walls near the Capitol, the cackling of geese gave timely warning. ¶ 222. *Hockley-Hole:* a spot outside the city walls, where there was a bear-garden. *White's:* see note on l. 203. ¶ 231, 232. "It was a practice so to give the *Daily Gazetteer* and ministerial pamphlets (in which this B. was a writer), and to send them post-free to all the towns in the kingdom."—P. and W. ¶ 233. *Ward:* "Edward Ward, a very voluminous poet in Hudibrastic verse."—P. ¶ 234. *Mundungus*=bad tobacco. The line means that Ward's poems were sent to the colonies to be used in packing tobacco and that this was the only way they could be disposed of. ¶ 236. *to pelt your sire:* oranges were sold in the theaters, and actors sometimes were pelted with the peels.

(119) 244. *the master of the sev'nfold face.* Cf. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, xiii. 2, "Clypei dominus septemplicis Ajax," and Dryden's translation, "The master of the sevenfold shield." The allusion is to Cibber's brazen effrontery; cf. "Cibberian forehead," l. 218. ¶ 250–52. *Cid . . . . Perolla . . . . Caesar . . . . King John:* tragedies by Cibber. ¶ 253. "*Nonjuror*": see note on l. 132. ¶ 258. "*Thulè*": "An unfinished poem of that name, of which one sheet was printed many years ago, by Amb. Philips, a northern author; . . . . an allegorical allusion to the coldness and heaviness of the writing."—P. ¶ 262. Cf. "Mac Flecknoe," l. 110 (p. 32). ¶ 269–72. Pope compares the *Æneid*, i. 12–18. ¶ 270. *Quidnuncs:* "A name given to the ancient members of certain political clubs, who were constantly enquiring, 'Quid nunc?' 'What news?' "—P. *Guildhall:* the council hall of the city of London.

(120) 281. *less reading than makes felons 'scape:* the allusion is to the so-called benefit of clergy, "originally the privilege of exemption from trial by a secular court, allowed to, or claimed by, clergymen arraigned for felony; in later times the privilege of exemption from the sentence, which, in the case of certain offences, might be pleaded on his first conviction by every one who could read."—*A New English Dictionary.* ¶ 285. *Plautus:* the Roman writer of comedies, of the second century B. C. *Corneille:* Pierre Corneille (1606–84), the great French dramatist of the classical school. ¶ 286. *Ozell:* an obscure translator of French plays. ¶ 290. *Heideggre:* "A strange bird from Switzerland, and not (as some have supposed) the name of an eminent person."—P. J. J. Heidegger, a Swiss, was manager of the opera house in Haymarket, London, and Master of the Revels under George II; his features were

remarkably ugly. ¶ 293. *Eusden:* former poet laureate (see l. 104); he was a drunken parson, who died in 1730; cf. "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," l. 15 (p. 121). ¶ 296. *Withers:* George Withers or Wither (1588–1667), an English poet of some merit, much depreciated at this time. *Gildon:* "Charles Gildon, a writer of criticisms and libels of the last age; . . . . he signalized himself as a critic, having written some very bad plays; abused Mr. P. very scandalously in an anonymous pamphlet."—P. ¶ 297. *Howard:* Hon. Edward Howard, author of *The British Princes* and a great number of wonderful pieces."—P. ¶ 298. *fool of quality:* i. e., a nobleman who is a fool; the person alluded to was Lord Hervey, a court favorite, whom Pope violently hated; cf. "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," ll. 305 ff. (p. 128), and the note (p. 458). ¶ 302. *cat-call:* "A squeaking instrument used in playhouses to express disapprobation or weariness of the performance."—*The Century Dictionary.* ¶ 309. *Archer's:* Thomas Archer was groom-porter to the king; he had sheltered gambling at court, contrary to the statute and the king's wishes. ¶ 319. *the Chapel Royal throat:* "The king's household included twenty-four musicians with an annual salary. These no doubt were employed to sing in the Chapel Royal and on the king's birthday."—Croker.

(121) 324. *Needham:* "A matron of great fame, and very religious in her way."—P. and W. Both the line and the note are ironical. ¶ 325. *the Devil:* "The Devil Tavern in Fleet Street, where these odes [odes by the poet laureate] are usually rehearsed before they are performed at court."—P. and W. ¶ 327. "See Ogilby's *Æsop's Fables*, where, in the story of the frogs and their king, this excellent hemistich is to be found."—P. "In the days of old, when the frogs were all at liberty in the lakes and grown quite weary of living without government, they petitioned Jupiter for a king. . . . . Jupiter, that knew the vanity of their hearts, threw them down a log for their governor, which upon the first dash frightened the whole *mobile* of them into the mud for the very fear on 't."—*Æsop's Fables*, Roger L'Estrange's version (1692).

(121) EPISTLE TO DR. ARBUTHNOT. ¶ 1. *John:* John Searl, Pope's old servant. ¶ 9. *by land, by water:* Twickenham (often pronounced "Twit'nam"), Pope's villa, was on the Thames, only a dozen miles from London, and easily reached thence either by coach or by boat. ¶ 12. *no Sabbath day:* i. e., no day of rest. ¶ 13. *the Mint:* a district in London, on the south side of the Thames, where a mint once stood; debtors were exempt from arrest there, and many remained there six days a week, coming out only on Sunday, when they could not be arrested anywhere. ¶ 15. *a parson:* Lawrence Eusden, parson, poet laureate, and drunkard. ¶ 19, 20. Cf. Boileau's *L'Art poétique* (1674), I. 22: "Charbonner de ses vers les murs d'un cabaret," "To write his verses with charcoal on the walls of an inn;" also Martial XII. lxi. ¶ 23. *Arthur:* "Arthur Moore, Esq."—W. "He was M. P. [member of Parliament], a Commissioner of Trade and Plantations, and well known in the fashionable world."—Croker. His son was James Moore Smyth, whom Pope refers to again in ll. 373, 385. ¶ 25. *Cornus:* according to Horace Walpole, Cornus was his father, Robert Walpole, the famous prime minister; Walpole's wife, whom Horace Walpole called half mad, left him in 1734.

(122) 27. *Friend to my life:* Dr. John Arbuthnot, a Scotchman, physician to Queen Anne, and member of the Royal College of Physicians; he was for many years an intimate friend of Swift and Pope, co-operating with them in the writings of the Scriblerus Club. ¶ 33. "Alluding to the scene [V. iii] in *The Plain Dealer* [by Wycherley] where Oldfox gags and ties down the widow, to hear his well-penned stanzas."—W. ¶ 39, 40. Cf. Horace, *De arte poetica*, l. 388, "Nonumque prematur in annum," "Let it be printed in the ninth year." ¶ 43. *Term:* i. e., the term of the law courts; term-time was the best time for bringing out a poem, because it was the London "season." ¶ 47, 48. A canceled couplet in one manuscript shows that the person referred to was Theobald; see note on "The Dunciad," I. 1 (p. 452). ¶ 48. *a prologue;* i. e., a prologue by Pope for the poetaster's new play. ¶ 49. *Pitholeon:* "The name taken from a foolish poet of Rhodes, who pretended much to Greek."—P. The person referred to was probably Leonard Welsted, translator of Longinus, who had satirized Pope. *his Grace:* probably the Duke of Argyle. ¶ 53. *Curll:* an unscrupulous publisher; see note

on "The Dunciad," I. 40. (p. 452). ¶ 54. The sense is that Pitholeon will use his acquaintance with Curll to injure Pope by getting an abusive article into one of the journals, or he will revenge himself on the world in general by publishing a worthless book on divinity if Pope won't help him to a patron; Welsted did publish such a book in 1736, and Pope may have known that he was preparing one. ¶ 56. *A virgin tragedy:* "Alludes to a tragedy called *The Virgin Queen*, by Mr. R. Barford, published in 1729, who displeased Pope by daring to adopt the fine machinery of his sylphs in an heroi-comical poem called 'The Assembly.' "—Warton. ¶ 62. *Lintot:* the publisher of Pope's translation of Homer.

(123) 69–72. Midas, king of Phrygia, in a musical contest between Pan and Apollo preferred the rustic music of the former, whereupon Apollo changed his ears to ass's ears; his barber (according to the usual story), discovering the secret, could not contain but whispered it into a hole in the earth. ¶ 85. *Codrus:* the name of a poetaster in Juvenal. ¶ 90. *Bavius:* a small Roman poet, the enemy of Virgil and Horace; because of the contemptuous references to him his name came to be used for any poor writer. In the first edition the name of Arnall, a newspaper writer in the interest of Walpole, was used. ¶ 100. *one bishop:* Bishop Boulter, patron of Ambrose Philips, the rival of Pope in pastoral poetry. ¶ 101. *Sappho:* probably Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, a poetess and letter-writer, one of the most brilliant women of her day; she had been friends with Pope, who had or affected to have a passion for her, but they quarreled and became lifelong enemies.

(124) 113. *This prints my letters:* Curll had got hold of some of Pope's letters and printed them; Pope affected great anger, but it is now practically certain that he allowed the letters to appear that he might have an excuse for bringing out a complete and authorized edition himself. ¶ 114. *"subscribe":* i. e., to projected works by them. ¶ 116. *though lean, am short:* i. e., like Horace in height, although not stout like him. ¶ 117. *Ammon's great son:* Alexander the Great, who claimed descent from Jupiter Ammon. ¶ 118. *Such Ovid's nose:* the Roman poet Ovid was supposed to have got his surname of "Naso" from his conspicuous nose. *an eye:* "It is remarkable that, amongst the compliments on his infirmities and deformities, he mentions his eye, which was fine, sharp, and piercing; it was done to intimate that flattery was as odious to him when there was some ground for commendation as when there was none."—W. ¶ 122. *Maro:* Virgil. ¶ 130. *no father disobeyed:* cf. l. 23. ¶ 131. *not wife:* "I suspect that the words . . . . were meant to repel the rumors of his marriage with Martha Blount."—Croker. ¶ 135. *Granville:* see note on "Spring," l. 46 (p. 444). ¶ 136. *Walsh:* William Walsh, a minor poet, called by Dryden "the best critic of our nation"; see pp. 442, 461. ¶ 137. *Garth:* Sir Samuel Garth, physician and poet, whose chief poem is "The Dispensary" (1699). ¶ 138. *Congreve:* the most brilliant of the Restoration dramatists. ¶ 139. *Talbot, Somers, Sheffield:* all were noblemen and statesmen of high rank; Sheffield was also a poet. ¶ 140. *mitred Rochester:* Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester. ¶ 141. *St. John's self:* Lord Bolingbroke; see note on "An Essay on Man," I. 1 (p. 459). ¶ 146. *Burnets, Oldmixons, and Cookes:* "Authors of secret and scandalous history."—P. Bishop Gilbert Burnet wrote *A History of My Own Time* (1723); John Oldmixon, *History of England during the Reign of the Royal House of Stuart* (1730–39); Thomas Cooke, *The Scandalous Chronicle* (1726). Burnet was a Whig, while Pope was a Tory. The other two men had criticized Pope in some of their works. ¶ 149. *Fanny's:* Fanny is Lord Hervey (see l. 305); the name is a pretended translation of "Fannius," a foolish critic and enemy of Horace. ¶ 151. *Gildon:* see note on "The Dunciad," I. 206 (p. 455). *venal quill:* "Gildon wrote a thing about Wycherley, in which he had abused both me and my relations very grossly. Lord Warwick himself . . . . assured me that Addison had encouraged Gildon to publish those scandals, and had given him ten guineas after they were published."—Pope, quoted in Spence's *Anecdotes*, Section IV (1734–36).

(125) 153. *Dennis:* see note on "The Dunciad," I. 106 (p. 453). ¶ 164. *slashing Bentley:* Richard Bentley (1662–1742), the great classical scholar, suggested some eight hundred emendations of the text of *Paradise Lost*, which he supposed to have been corrupted

by an unscrupulous editor employed by the blind poet; most of his changes are bad, and some are atrocious. Bentley had offended Pope by criticizing his translation of Homer. *Tibbalds:* see note on "The Dunciad," I. 1 (p. 452). ¶ 172. Cf. Dryden's prologue to *The Husband His Own Cuckold:* "And wonders how the devil they durst come there." ¶ 180. "Amb. Philips translated a book called *The Persian Tales.*"—P. ¶ 190. *Tate:* see note on "The Dunciad," I. 105 (p. 453).

(126) 197. *fond to rule:* i. e., fond of ruling. ¶ 201. *Damn with faint praise:* cf. Wycherley's prologue to *The Plain Dealer* (1674): "And with faint praises one another damn." ¶ 209. Changed slightly from a line in Pope's prologue to Addison's *Cato* (1713), "While Cato gives his little senate laws." Addison had succeeded to Dryden's position as king of the world of English letters, and in the coffee-houses and elsewhere his utterances on literature were accepted as law by an admiring circle. ¶ 211. *Templars:* students of the law or lawyers, residing in the Temple, London, which was occupied by two societies of lawyers; many of these supposed students of law were really idlers and men about town, more interested in literature and the theater than in law. *raise*=rate highly, extol. ¶ 214. *Atticus:* in 1723, when this character-sketch was printed in a pamphlet, *Cythercia, or Poems upon Love and Intrigue*, the reading was "Addison." The lines were probably written about the year 1715, when Pope suspected that Addison, jealous of his rising fame, had been urging Tickell, one of Addison's satellites, to begin a rival translation of Homer. ¶ 222. *George:* George II; there is a sly reference to this dull monarch's indifference to poetry and art. ¶ 225. *daggled*=ran through mud and water. ¶ 227. *Nor at rehearsals sweat:* i. e., did not seek for popular fame by writing plays and training the actors at rehearsals of them. ¶ 230. *Bufo:* probably Charles Montagu, Earl of Halifax, statesman, poet, and patron of letters; he had offended Pope by patronizing Tickell, who dedicated to him his translation of a part of the *Iliad*. *Castalian state:* the realm of poets. Castalia, a fountain on Mt. Parnassus, the fabled abode of the Muses, was supposed to give poetic inspiration. ¶ 231. *forkéd hill:* the top of Parnassus was cleft.

(127) 239. *seat:* country seat, or estate. ¶ 243. *a dry rehearsal:* i. e., the poor authors were allowed to read their works to the great man, but got no dinner. ¶ 244. *paid in kind:* i. e., he read them his own poems. ¶ 250. *Bavius:* see note on l. 99. ¶ 254. *whistled:* "The image is taken from hawking, the whistle being the signal for slipping the hawk."—Courthope. ¶ 256. *Gay:* John Gay (1685–1732), the poet; he was intimate with Pope and Swift. ¶ 257. *neglected genius:* "He [Gay] dangled for twenty years about a court, and at last was offered to be made usher to the young princesses."—Pope, quoted in Spence's *Anecdotes*, Section V (1737–39). Gay declined the place as beneath him. ¶ 260. *Queensb'ry:* the Duke and the Duchess of Queensbury, in whose house Gay died, gave him a funeral and monument in Westminster Abbey. ¶ 261, 262. Cf. John Denham's "Of Prudence" (1668), ll. 93, 94:

> Learn to live well, that thou mayst die so too;
> To live and die is all we have to do.

¶ 266. *a minister my friend:* Pope was a friend of James Craggs, Secretary of State for War in 1717.

(128) 276. *Balbus:* the Earl of Kinnoul, who had been intimate with Pope and Swift, but later lost their esteem. ¶ 280. *Sir Will:* Sir William Yonge; Pope disliked him as a prominent Whig and a prosecutor of his friend Atterbury, who was banished as a Jacobite in 1723. *Bubo:* George Bubb Dodington, Baron Melcombe, a time-serving politician and a patron of letters; his offense seems to be hinted at in ll. 291, 292. ¶ 299. "Meaning the man who would have persuaded the Duke of Chandos that Mr. Pope meant him in those circumstances ridiculed in the 'Epistle on Taste.' "—P. The lines referred to are in "Moral Essays," IV. 141, 149:

> And now the chapel's silver bell you hear.
> To rest, the cushion and soft dean invite.

¶ 300. *Canons:* a residence of the Duke of Chandos. ¶ 302. "That is, pervert a general and justifiable satire into lampoon, and a poetical fiction into a slanderous lie."—Croker. ¶ 305. *Sporus.* "Sporus" was the name of an effeminate favorite of the Emperor Nero It is here applied to Lord Hervey, son of the Earl of Bristol, a court favorite and a Whig, holding a high office under Walpole. Pope cordially hated him (according to tradition, because of his rival intimacy with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu), and satirized him in several poems. In reply there came out, in 1733, "Verses Addressed to the Imitator of the First Satire of the Second Book of Horace," attributed to Hervey and Lady Mary, which meanly attacked Pope's humble birth and physical deformity:

> Whilst none thy crabbed numbers can endure,
> Hard as thy heart and as thy birth obscure. . . . .
> Unwhipt, unblanketed, unkicked, unflain,
> That wretched little carcass you retain. . . . .
> When fretful porcupine, with rancorous will,
> From mounted back shoots forth a harmless quill
> Cool the spectators stand, and all the while
> Upon the angry little monster smile. . . . .
> But as thou hat'st, be hated by mankind,
> And with the emblem of thy crooked mind
> Marked on thy back, like Cain, by God's own hand,
> Wander, like him, accursèd through the land.

The present vitriolic lines were Pope's retort. ¶ 306 *ass's milk:* "Lord Hervey, to prevent the attacks of an epilepsy, persisted in a strict regimen of daily food, which was a small quantity of ass's milk, and a flour biscuit, with an apple once a week; and he used a little paint to soften his ghastly appearance."—Courthope.

(129) 319. "See Milton. Book IV."—P. The passage is *Paradise Lost*, IV 799 ff., where Satan is pictured as

> Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve,
> Assaying by his devilish art to reach
> The organs of her fancy.

Eve: the queen, with whom Hervey was intimate. ¶ 324. *now master up, now miss:* an allusion to Hervey's effeminacy. ¶ 328. *board:* the council board. 341. *stooped*=swooped down upon (a term from falconry). ¶ 343. *stood*=withstood. ¶ 349. An allusion to a report that Pope had been set upon and beaten, and shed tears because of the pain. ¶ 350. "As that he received subscriptions for Shakespeare, that he set his name to Mr. Broome's verses, etc., which, though publicly disproved, were nevertheless shamelessly repeated in the libels and even in that called 'The Nobleman's Epistle.' "—P. ¶ 353. *the pictured shape:* Hogarth and others had put Pope, as a hunchback, into their caricatures.

(130) 363. *Japhet:* Japhet Cooke, *alias* Sir Peter Stranger, who was put in jail for a forgery by which he conveyed an estate to himself. ¶ 365. *Knight of the post:* "The so-called 'Knights of the Post' stood about the sheriff's pillars near the courts, in readiness to swear anything for pay."—Ward. ¶ 369 *Sappho:* probably Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Cf. notes on ll. 101, 305. ¶ 371. Pope wrote a prologue for a play given for Dennis' benefit, in 1733. ¶ 373. *has rhymed for Moore:* Pope seems to have given James Moore Smyth permission to use six lines by himself ("Moral Essays," II. 243–48) in Smyth's play, *The Rival Modes.* ¶ 375. *Welsted's lie:* "This man had the impudence to tell in print that Mr. P. had occasioned a lady's death, and to name a person he never heard of. He also published that he libelled the Duke of Chandos."—P. ¶ 378, 379. Eustace Budgell, a friend of Addison and a contributor to *The Spectator*, was accused of forging a man's will in his own favor; Pope says that Budgell suspected him of having written about the matter, and consequently abused him in print; Budgell drowned himself in 1737. ¶ 380. *the two Curlls:* Curll the publisher (see note on "The Dunciad," I. 40, p. 452) and Lord Hervey. ¶ 388. "Mr. Pope's father was of a gentleman's family in Oxfordshire, the head of which was the Earl of Downe. . . . His mother was the daughter of William Turner, Esq., of York; she had three

brothers, one of whom was killed, another died in the service of King Charles."—P. ¶ 391. *Bestia's:* probably the reference is to Horace Walpole, the elder, uncle of the author of *The Castle of Otranto;* he was "beastly" in morals and person, and was "by rapine enriched" (so wrote his nephew). ¶ 393. *discord in a noble wife:* an allusion to Addison's unhappy marriage with the Countess of Warwick. ¶ 307. *Nor dared an oath:* he was a nonjuror, i. e., he refused to take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary as the sovereigns of England, believing that James II was the rightful king

(131) 410. *extend a mother's breath:* Pope says that his mother died "in 1733, aged 93, a very few weeks after this poem was finished." ¶ 417. *as when he served a queen:* see note on l. 27.

(131) AN ESSAY ON MAN. Epistle I. "The science of human nature is, like all other sciences, reduced to a few clear points. There are not many certain truths in this world. . . . . If I could flatter myself that this essay has any merit, it is in steering betwixt the extremes of doctrines seemingly opposite, in passing over terms utterly unintelligible, and in forming a temperate yet not inconsistent, and a short yet not imperfect, system of ethics. This I might have done in prose; but I chose verse, and even rhyme, for two reasons. The one will appear obvious; that principles, maxims, or precepts so written both strike the reader more strongly at first, and are more easily retained by him afterwards. The other may seem odd, but is true: I found I could express them more shortly this way than in prose itself; and nothing is more certain than that much of the force as well as grace of arguments or instructions depends on their conciseness."—Preface.

(131) 1. *St. John.* Henry St. John (1678–1751), Viscount Bolingbroke, statesman, political writer, and philosopher, was secretary of state under Queen Anne; favoring the Pretender, he fled to France after the death of Anne, in 1714, but was allowed to return to England in 1723, and soon after settled near Pope. By his flashy abilities as a philosophical thinker he strongly impressed the poet, and induced him to undertake some poems on philosophical subjects; the scheme was a large one, of which the "Essay on Man" and the "Moral Essays" are only a part, and was never completed. The exact amount and nature of Pope's indebtedness to Bolingbroke in the "Essay on Man" is in dispute, but it was great and intimate. Dr. Hugh Blair, who dined with Lord Bathurst in 1763, in a letter to Boswell (see Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson*, Globe ed., p. 512) says: "Lord Bathurst told us that the 'Essay on Man' was originally composed by Lord Bolingbroke in prose, and that Mr. Pope did no more than put it into verse; that he had read Lord Bolingbroke's manuscript in his own handwriting, and remembered well that he was at a loss whether most to admire the elegance of Lord Bolingbroke's prose or the beauty of Mr. Pope's verse." "The late Lord Bathurst repeatedly assured me that he had read the whole scheme of the 'Essay on Man' in the handwriting of Bolingbroke, and drawn up in a series of propositions, which Pope was to versify and illustrate."—Joseph Warton, *An Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, Vol. II (1782). "He mentioned then, and at several other times, how much (or rather how wholly) he himself was obliged to him [Bolingbroke] for the thoughts and reasonings in his moral work; and once in particular said that, beside their frequent talking over that subject together, he had received, I think, seven or eight sheets from Lord Bolingbroke in relation to it, as I apprehended by way of letters, both to direct the plan in general and to supply the matter for the particular epistles."—Spence, in his *Anecdotes*, Section IV (1734–36). ¶ 6. In the first edition, "A mighty maze of walks without a plan."

(132) 14. *manners*=ways of life, conduct, morals. ¶ 15. *candid:* the usual meaning of "unbiased, impartial," does not fit well here; Elwin thinks the sense is "lenient and favorable in our judgment." ¶ 16. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, I. 26: "And justify the ways of God to men." ¶ 29–32. Cf. Bolingbroke, *Fragment 43:* "Just so it is with respect to the various systems, and systems of systems, that compose the universe. As distant as they are, and as different as we may imagine them to be, they are all tied together by relations and connections, by gradations and dependencies." ¶ 29. *frame:* the structure of the universe. ¶ 41. *argent*

fields: cf. *Paradise Lost*, III. 460, "argent fields," where, however, the phrase refers to the moon and is therefore more appropriate than here. ¶ 43–48. Cf. Bolingbroke, *Fragment 43:* "Since infinite wisdom not only established the end but directed the means, the system of the universe must be necessarily the best of all possible systems. . . . . It might be determined in the divine ideas that there should be a gradation of life and intellect throughout the universe. In this case it was necessary that there should be some creatures at our pitch of rationality." ¶ 51, 52. Cf. Bolingbroke, *Fragment 50:* "The seeming imperfection of the parts is necessary to the real perfection of the whole." ¶ 53–56. Cf. Bolingbroke, *Fragments 43, 63:* "We labor hard, we complicate various means to arrive at one end." "In the works of men the most complicated schemes produce, very hardly and very uncertainly, one single effect. In the works of God one single scheme produces a multitude of different effects, and answers an immense variety of purposes."

(133) 64. "A bull was kept at Memphis by the Egyptians, and worshipped, under the name of Apis, as a god. Other oxen were sacrificed to him, which brought the bovine 'victims' and the bovine 'god' into direct contrast."—Elwin.

(134) 97. *from home:* before 1743 the reading was "at home," which seemed to imply that this world, instead of the next world, was the home of the soul; the change was made, it is said, at the instance of Bishop Warburton, who had come forward as Pope's champion against the charge of heresy in this poem. ¶ 102. "The ancient opinion that the souls of the just went thither."—P. ¶ 113. *sense:* i. e., the senses. ¶ 114. Cf. Bolingbroke, *Fragment 25:* "To approve them . . . . is to weigh his own opinion . . . . against Providence." ¶ 117. *gust*=pleasure of the palate; cf. "disgust." ¶ 126. Cf. Bolingbroke, *Fragment 52:* "Men would be angels, and we see in Milton that angels would be gods."

(135) 156. *Borgia:* Cesare Borgia (1478–1507), natural son of Pope Alexander VI, by whom he was made a cardinal and a duke; he murdered his brother, and by cruelty and perfidy oppressed and terrorized the Italian cities in his dukedom. *Catiline:* the conspirator against the Republic of Rome, whom Cicero exposed and drove from the city as a public enemy. ¶ 160. *young Ammon:* Alexander the Great, who claimed descent from Jupiter Ammon.

(136) 200. *aromatic pain:* cf. Lady Winchilsea's "Spleen" (1713), ll. 40, 41:

> Now the jonquille o'ercomes the feeble brain;
> We faint beneath the aromatic pain.

¶ 202. *the music of the spheres:* see note on "To the Memory of Mrs. Anne Killigrew," l. 40 (p. 436). ¶ 208. *sensual*=pertaining to the senses. ¶ 213. *headlong lioness:* "The manner of the lions hunting their prey in the deserts of Africa is this: at their first going out in the night-time they set up a loud roar, and then listen to the noise made by the beasts in their flight, pursuing them by the ear and not by the nostril."—P.

(137) 227. *middle natures:* apparently, natures intermediate between others above and below. ¶ 234. *quick*=alive (O. E. "cwic," alive); cf. Acts 10:42, "The Judge of quick and dead."

(138) 264. *gen'ral frame:* the universe. ¶ 278. *seraph that adores and burns:* "seraph" comes from a Hebrew word meaning "to burn;" the seraphim, in distinction from the contemplative cherubim, were characterized by worship so ardent that it consumed them.

(139) MORAL ESSAYS. Epistle II. 1–68, 115–50, 249–92. The lady to whom the epistle is addressed was Martha Blount, who kept house for Pope many years and whom he probably would have liked to marry. ¶ 7–14. "Attitudes in which several ladies affected to be drawn, and sometimes one lady in them all."—P. ¶ 23. *Locke:* the English philosopher (1632–1704). ¶ 24. *Sappho's . . . . dirty smock:* Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was slovenly; see note on "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," l. 101 (p. 456).

(140) 51. *passion:* i. e., love. ¶ 54. *a wash:* a face-wash for the complexion. ¶ 63. *Taylor:* Jeremy Taylor (1613–67), author of *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying*. ¶ 64. *his Grace:* some nobleman. *Chartres:* an infamous money-lender of the times. ¶ 69. *Atossa's:* the

character of Atossa is a compound of traits taken from the Duchess of Marlborough and the Duchess of Buckingham.

(141) 107. *the Ring:* a fashionable curving drive in Hyde Park, London.

(142) 122. *codille:* see note on "The Rape of the Lock," III. 92 (p. 449). ¶ 123. *vapours:* see note on "The Rape of the Lock," IV. 59 (p. 450). ¶ 124. Cf. "The Rape of the Lock," III. 157–60 (p. 100).

(142) SATIRES AND EPISTLES OF HORACE IMITATED. *To Augustus*, ll. 69–138. The poem is in imitation of the first epistle of the second book of Horace's epistles.

(143) 6. *the life to come:* i. e., immortal fame, which can be won only by the most careful art. ¶ 7. *Cowley:* Abraham Cowley (1618–67), a poet of the "metaphysical," or "conceited," school; he wrote *Davideis*, a narrative poem in four books, and many so-called Pindaric odes of irregular structure, besides love poems; very popular in his day, and described on his gravestone in Westminster Abbey as the Pindar and Horace of his age, he soon fell out of sight as the fashion in poetry changed after the Restoration. ¶ 15. *nature:* natural genius, in distinction from art. ¶ 16. It was the tradition about Beaumont and Fletcher—who wrote together some of the best Elizabethan plays—that the latter was the more creative and the former the more critical. ¶ 17. *Shadwell:* see introductory note on Dryden's "Mac Flecknoe" (p. 433) and the note on ll. 166, 167 (p. 434). *Wycherley:* one of the earliest and best of the Restoration dramatists. *slow:* "Nothing was less true than this particular. But the whole paragraph has a mixture of irony, ... only the common chat of the pretenders to criticism, in some things right, in others wrong."—P. ¶ 18. *Southern . . . . Rowe:* minor dramatists of the Restoration period. ¶ 20. *eldest Heywood:* John Heywood (1500?–80?), the writer of interludes, and a forerunner of the regular dramatists in England; he is called eldest in distinction from Thomas Heywood, a contemporary of Shakspere. ¶ 23. "*Gammer Gurton*": "A piece of very low humor, one of the first printed plays in English, and therefore much valued by some antiquaries."—P. The full title is *Gammer Gurton's Needle;* it was acted in 1566, printed in 1575. ¶ 24. "*Careless Husband*": a play by Colley Cibber; this line was written before Pope had quarreled with him; cf. note on "The Dunciad," I. 188 (p. 454). ¶ 30. *Roman feet:* Sir Philip Sidney (1554–86), like several other poets of his day, tried to write quantitative English verse, in imitation of Latin verse; specimens may be seen in his *Arcadia*. ¶ 33, 34. See *Paradise Lost*, VI. 609–28, and III. 96 ff. ¶ 36. *Bentley:* see note on "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," l. 164 (p. 456). *hook:* this may mean either the sickle-like instrument used in cutting grain, or the brackets in which Bentley inclosed lines which he suspected were spurious. 37. *th' affected fool:* Lord Hervey, who had written thus about his school studies; cf. note on "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," l. 305 (p. 458). ¶ 39. *either Charles's:* Charles I and Charles II.

(144) 54. *Betterton's:* Thomas Betterton (1635–1710) was the greatest actor of his time. ¶ 55. *Booth:* Barton Booth (1681–1733), who played in Shaksperean parts with Betterton. *with emphasis proclaims:* "An absurd custom of several actors to pronounce with emphasis the mere proper names of Greeks and Romans."—P. Booth had offended Pope by calling his "Windsor Forest" "a wretched rhapsody." ¶ 57. Theobald had censured Pope for his criticism of Shakspere in the preface of his edition of the poet; see note on "The Dunciad," I. 1 (p. 452). ¶ 64. "*Merlin's Prophecy*": certain prophecies, written in Latin, were attributed to Merlin, the wizard of the legendary King Arthur's court.

CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM

"The preface is very judicious and very learned, and the verses [Pope's "Pastorals"] very tender and easy. The author seems to have a particular genius for that kind of poetry, and a judgment that much exceeds the years you told me he was of. He has taken very freely from the ancients, but what he has mixed of his own with theirs is not inferior to what he has taken from them. 'T is no flattery at all to say that Virgil had written nothing so good at his age."—William Walsh, in a letter to Wycherley, April 20, 1705.

"I am sorry to find that an author who is very justly esteemed among the best judges has admitted some strokes of this nature [attacks upon contemporary writers] into a very fine poem; I mean 'The Art of Criticism,' which was published some months since, and is a masterpiece in its kind. The observations follow one another like those in Horace's 'Art of Poetry,' without that methodical regularity which would have been requisite in a prose author. They are some of them uncommon, but such as the reader must assent to when he sees them explained with that elegance and perspicuity in which they are delivered. As for those which are the most known and the most received, they are placed in so beautiful a light, and illustrated with such apt allusions, that they have in them all the graces of novelty, and make the reader who was before acquainted with them still more convinced of their truth and solidity." —Addison, in *The Spectator*, December 20, 1711.

"Some verses, said to be written by a lord upon Mr. Pope, intimate that he has invented nothing. To take from him the most essential characteristic of a poet is wrong; it 's confessed he has written two or three original poems—enough for one man, and as much as Mr. Dryden himself did, except plays. Mr. Pope is a great man. an excellent poet; but where the author of the verses says

> Pope is called poet 'cause in rhyme he wrote
> What Dacier construed and what Homer thought,

he has made him a compliment he does not deserve, though he intended to abuse him as a mere translator of a translation. His version may be justly censured: the sense is often mistaken; not seldom Homer is made to say unnatural things; and ten or dozen places would make the reader smile."—*The Grub Street Journal*, March 7, 1734, quoted in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, March, 1734.

"Mr. Pope is undoubtedly the greatest genius of the age, in whom all the qualifications of a good poet and an excellent critic are eminently joined. This author has a fine imagination, a delicate judgment, and such a beautiful diction, such an enlivened flow of words, as no modern before him was ever master of. . . . . But that which is particularly remarkable in the writings of this noble poet is that flame and spirit which he so justly admires in his great master Homer. . . . . Pope's 'Essay on Criticism' is the most masterly piece of the kind that is extant."—John Boswell, M. A., Prebendary of Wells, in *The London Magazine*, November, 1738.

"Only the noblest genius and best satirist of our age could with so lively a spirit lash the follies and vices of it. Mr. P*** has been in this piece [the "Dunciad," Book IV] equal to himself, though some of our town critics will not allow it. The censure they pass is that the satire is too allegorical, and the characters he has drawn are too concealed; that real names should have been inserted instead of fictitious ones; in short, that he should have put on a severity, which others would as heavily have censured. . . . . The poet has made the Sovereign of Dulness come in all the majesty of a goddess, to destroy Science and Learning: the description of Science, Wit, etc., captives at the footstool of Dulness is a picture so full of imagery that every figure as much presents itself to your view as if drawn by the pencil of LeBrun."—Letter in *The Universal Spectator*, April 3 and 10, 1742, reprinted in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, April, 1742.

"Rest satisfied that 'whatever is,' by the appointment of Heaven, 'is right,' is best. . . . . If Mr. Pope understands the maxim according to the limitation suggested above, he speaks a most undeniable and glorious truth. But if that great poet includes whatever comes to pass through the wild and extravagant passions of men, surely no thinking person, at least no Christian, can accede to his opinion."—James Hervey, *Meditations and Contemplations* (1746).

"At length the impatience of the public is gratified by the appearance of this long-expected edition [Warburton's] of the works of the great Prince of English poets."—*The Monthly Review*, July, 1751.

"Is not the poetry of these lines ['Summer,' ll. 71-84] superior to anything in either the pastorals of Theocritus or the eclogues of Virgil? But it would greatly exceed the bounds

allowed us to point out every other passage in Pope where he has surpassed the Sicilian and the Mantuan: we shall, therefore, only observe that the English poet, by appropriating a pastoral to every season of the year and ascertaining the scene and time of the day in each of them, has improved on his two masters, and particularly on Virgil, whom he seems chiefly to have imitated, as both Theocritus and the Roman often neglect to specify the season, scene, and time of day. . . . . If there are more of manners and of the *rus verum* in Theocritus, it must be allowed that there is more tenderness, more delicacy, and finer sudden transitions in Pope. . . . . He who enriches a work with a new moral sentiment is as much an inventor as he who recites a tale of fancy. But what poet ever introduced so many new things, in that way, as Pope?"—*The Monthly Review*, June and July, 1756.

"I revere the memory of Pope, I respect and honor his abilities; but I do not think him at the head of his profession. In other words, in that species of poetry wherein Pope excelled, he is superior to all mankind; and I only say that this species of poetry is not the most excellent one of the art. We do not, it should seem, sufficiently attend to the difference there is betwixt a man of wit, a man of sense, and a true poet. . . . . All I plead for is to have their several provinces kept distinct from each other; and to impress on the reader that a clear head and acute understanding are not sufficient alone to make a poet; that the most solid observations on human life, expressed with the utmost elegance and brevity, are morality and not poetry; . . . . and that it is a creative and glowing imagination, 'acer spiritus ac vis,' and that alone, that can stamp a writer with this exalted and very uncommon character. . . . . The sublime and the pathetic are the two chief nerves of all genuine poesy. What is there transcendently sublime or pathetic in Pope? . . . . Upon the whole, I hope it will not be thought an exaggerated panegyric to say that 'The Rape of the Lock' is the best satire extant; that it contains the truest and liveliest picture of modern life; and that the subject is of a more elegant nature, as well as more artfully conducted, than that of any other heroi-comic poem. . . . . It is in this composition Pope principally appears a poet; in which he has displayed more imagination than in all his other works taken together."—Joseph Warton, *An Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, Vol. I (1756).

" 'Every ear must feel the ill effect of the monotony in these lines ["An Essay on Man," I. 267–74]. The cause of it is obvious: this verse consists of ten syllables, or five feet; when the pause falls on the fourth syllable, we shall find that we pronounce the six last in the same time that we do the four first, so that the couplet is not only divided into two equal lines, but each line, with respect to time, is divided into two equal parts. . . . . Or else the pause falls on the fifth syllable, and then the line is divided with a mechanic exactness.' Though we entirely agree with Mr. Webb that every ear must feel the monotony of these lines, it may notwithstanding be said, in favor of Mr. Pope, that the division of the line into two equal parts, though it is prejudicial to the verbal harmony, may yet in some measure promote the sentimental by keeping the ideas more distinct and consequently impressing them more strongly on the mind; that mechanic exactness which our author complains of, and which indeed gives an air of stiffness to the numbers, has its advantage in ethic poetry, which requires the utmost brevity, precision, and regularity."—*The Critical Review*, May, 1762, in a review of Webb's *Remarks on the Beauties of Poetry*.

"In a word, he [Chaucer] was (as a certain biographer terms him) the morning-star of this art; for as we descend to later times we can trace the progress of English poetry from this great original to its full blaze and perfect consummation in Dryden and Pope."—*The Critical Review*, January, 1764.

"We cannot think with him [Goldsmith] that the letter of Eloisa to Abelard may be considered as superior to anything in the epistolary way. The very harmony of numbers for which he commends it we think destroys its merit. . . . . This editor might have said, with great justice, that no composition in any language can equal its warmth, its passion, its ecstasy, and wildness."—*The Critical Review*, June, 1767.

"One of his greatest, though of his earliest, works, is the 'Essay on Criticism,' which,

if he had written nothing else, would have placed him among the first critics and the first poets, as it exhibits every mode of excellence that can embellish or dignify didactic composition—selection of matter, novelty of arrangement, justness of precept, splendor of illustration, and propriety of digression. . . . . The comparison of a student's progress in the sciences with the journey of a traveller in the Alps is perhaps the best that English poetry can show. . . . . 'The Rape of the Lock' stands forward, in the classes of literature, as the most exquisite example of ludicrous poetry; . . . . with elegance of description and justness of precepts, he had now exhibited boundless fertility of invention. . . . . He cultivated our language with so much diligence and art that he has left in his 'Homer' a treasure of poetical elegancies to posterity. His version may be said to have tuned the English tongue; for since its appearance no writer, however deficient in other powers, has wanted melody. . . . . The 'Essay on Man' was a work of great labor and long consideration, but certainly not the happiest of Pope's performances. The subject is perhaps not very proper for poetry, and the poet was not sufficiently master of his subject: metaphysical morality was to him a new study; he was proud of his acquisitions, and, supposing himself master of great secrets, was in haste to teach what he had not learned. . . . . His poetry has been censured as too uniformly musical and as glutting the ear with unvaried sweetness. I suspect this objection to be the cant of those who judge by principles rather than perception, and who would even themselves have less pleasure in his works if he had tried to relieve attention by studied discords or affected to break his lines and vary his pauses. . . . . New sentiments and new images others may produce; but to attempt any farther improvement of versification will be dangerous. Art and diligence have now done their best, and what shall be added will be the effort of tedious toil and needless curiosity. After all this it is surely superfluous to answer the question that has once been asked, whether Pope was a poet, otherwise than by asking in return, If Pope be not a poet, where is poetry to be found?''—Samuel Johnson, *Lives of the English Poets* (1779–81).

"Mr. Pope's Ethical Epistles deserve to be mentioned with signal honor as a model, next to perfect, of this kind of poetry. Here, perhaps, the strength of his genius appeared. In the more sublime parts of poetry he is not so distinguished. In the enthusiasm, the fire, the force and copiousness of poetic genius, Dryden, though a much less correct writer, appears to have been superior to him. . . . . That he was not incapable of tender poetry appears from the epistle of Eloisa to Abelard, and from the verses 'To the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady,' which are almost his only sentimental productions, and which indeed are excellent in their kind. But the qualities for which he is chiefly distinguished are judgment and wit, with a concise and happy expression and a melodious versification."—Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783).

See also p. 312.

THOMAS PARNELL

(144) A Hymn to Contentment.

(145) 26. *in trailing purple:* i. e., in wearing the purple robes of a king.

(149) The Hermit. Parnell may have got the material for the poem from James Howell's *Familiar Letters* (1645–55), IV. iv, where the same story is told although less artfully. ¶ 26. *scallop:* the scallop-shell was the badge of prilgrims, who used it for spoon, cup, and dish. ¶ 33. *decent*=comely.

(151) 103. *eager*=biting, sour (Latin "acer," sharp, sour). ¶ 107. *remark*=notice.

(152) 155. *fact*=deed (Latin "factum," act, deed). ¶ 163. *nice*=requiring careful attention.

JOHN GAY

(155) The Shepherd's Week. *Thursday, or the Spell.* "The Shepherd's Week," written at Pope's suggestion, was meant to make ridiculous the pastorals of Pope's rival, Ambrose Philips, by carrying to extremes certain elements of rusticity by which the latter had tried to render his lines lifelike. Cf. *The Guardian* (1713), Nos. 30, 32, 40, in which Pope

cunningly belittled Philips' pastorals by mock praise of their homely simplicity in contrast to the finished elegance of his own.

(157) 79. *slight*=skill; cf. "sleight-of-hand."

(158) 112. *inkle:* braid or tape.

(158) A BALLAD. From *The What D' Ye Call It*, II. viii.

(159) TRIVIA. Subtitle, "The Art of Walking the Streets of London." Book I. 1–6; Book II. 7–64; Book III. 353–92, 407–16. "Trivia," as adjective or substantive, was used of any goddess, as Artemis, whose temple often stood at the junction of "three roads"; here it is used as the name of a goddess of streets.

(160) 4. *assert the wall:* i. e., assert one's right to walk next the wall, where the footing was dryer and cleaner; the sidewalks were not curbed in from the street, and the outer edge was often filthy. ¶ 10. *Billingsgate:* the chief fishmarket of London. ¶ 11. *chalks her gains:* i. e., writes with chalk on the customer's door the amount of milk delivered.

(161) 58. *powder:* wigs were sprinkled with white powder. ¶ 62. *kennel's*=gutter's. ¶ 80. *The Dardan hero:* Æneas, who bore his aged father on his back out of burning Troy. Dardanus was supposed to be the ancestor of the Trojans.

(162) 100. *Naples' fate:* i. e., the fate to be destroyed by an eruption of Mt. Vesuvius. ¶ 109. *W* and G**:* Walsh and Granville; see notes on Pope's "Spring," l. 46 (p. 444), and "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," l. 136 (p. 456). ¶ 110. *Chelsea:* a suburb of London; Vauxhall Gardens, a fashionable resort, and many popular inns were situated there. *under custards:* cooks put leaves from old books under pies and custards. ¶ 111. *critics:* i. e., the paper on which their books were printed. ¶ 113. *Fleet Street posts:* the booksellers advertised their books on posts outside their shops, many of which were in Fleet St.

(162) MY OWN EPITAPH. This epitaph is on the poet's grave in Westminster Abbey.

(163) SWEET WILLIAM'S FAREWELL TO BLACK-EYED SUSAN. ¶ 1. *Downs:* "A road for shipping in the English Channel, ... employed as a naval rendezvous in time of war."—*The International Dictionary*. The name is derived from the downs, or tracts of hilly country, along the neighboring coast of the county of Kent.

(164) THE FOX AT THE POINT OF DEATH. *Fables*, No. 29. ¶ 23. *liqu'rish*=sensual, uxurious.

(165) 26. *gins*=traps.

ALLAN RAMSAY

For the meaning of words see Glossary to Scotch Poems, p. 509.

(167) THE GENTLE SHEPHERD. Act I, scene i. This scene was first published separately, in 1721, as "Patie and Roger."

MATTHEW GREEN

(173) THE SPLEEN. Lines 624–715. ¶ 2. *goddess:* Contentment.

(174) 31. *Eurus:* the east wind. ¶ 54. *Silenus:* foster-father of Bacchus, and leader of the satyrs.

(175) 78. *liv'ry smile:* i. e., a smile worn in the regular service of Virtue.

JOHN DYER

(175) GRONGAR HILL. Grongar Hill is in southwestern Wales; the poet was born and reared at its base. Compare the poem with Denham's "Cooper's Hill" (1642) with regard to title and subject-matter; with regard to meter, compare Milton's "L'Allegro." ¶ 1. *Silent nymph:* the Muse of Painting; see ll. 5, 10, 14.

(176) 14. *landskip:* Dyer follows Milton (cf. "L'Allegro," l. 70) in his preference for this form over "landscape"; it is nearer to the O. E. "landscipe," region. ¶ 33–36. Cf. Pope's "Essay on Criticism," ll. 112–19 (p. 86).

(177) 66. *lawn*=a grassy field.

JAMES THOMSON

(179) THE SEASONS. "Winter," ll. 223–321. "Summer," ll. 352–468, 783–801. "Spring," ll. 1–113. "Autumn," ll. 950–1003.

(182) *Summer.*

(184) 78, 79. Added in the edition of 1746, when England and France were at war.

(185) *Spring.* ¶ 5. *Hertford:* the Countess of Hertford, a patroness of the poet.

(186) 26, 27. *Aries . . . . Bull:* about the middle of April, the sun, in its apparent motion through the zodiac, leaves the sign of the Ram and enters that of the Bull. ¶ 30. *sublime*=high up, in the upper sky. ¶ 44. *White:* this is the reading in all the early editions, but one is tempted to think it a typographical error for "while."

(187) 55. *rural Maro:* Virgil in his *Georgics.* ¶ 60. *some:* such as Cincinnatus, the Roman legendary hero of the fifth century B. C., who was called from his farm to be dictator, defeated the invading army of Æquians, laid down the dictatorship after sixteen days, and returned to his plough.

(190) THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. Canto I, stanzas 1–11, 19–22, 24–29, 33–43. "This poem being writ in the manner of Spenser, the obsolete words, and a simplicity of diction in some of the lines, which borders on the ludicrous, were necessary to make the imitation more perfect. And the style of that admirable poet, as well as the measure in which he wrote, are, as it were, appropriated by custom to all allegorical poems writ in our language; just as in French the style of Marot, who lived under Francis I, has been used in tales and familiar epistles by the politest writers of the age of Louis XIV."—Prefatory "Advertisement" by Thomson. ¶ 3. *emmet*=ant. ¶ 4. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."—Gen. 3:19. ¶ 8. *bale*=trouble. ¶ 31. *vacant*=empty of care.

(191) 56. *hight*=was called.

(192) 97. *Astraea:* goddess of justice; she was the last of the gods to leave the earth, in the Iron Age.

(193) 121. *han*=have. ¶ 124. *perdie:* the same as "pardy"=by God (French "pardi," "pardieu"). ¶ 132. *the giant crew:* the Titans, who rebelled against Jupiter.

(194) 168. *nepenthe*=joy and forgetfulness of care (Greek *νη-*, not, and *πένθος*, grief). ¶ 169. *Dan*=Master, a title of honor (Latin "dominus," lord, master); cf. "Don" and "Dame." *Homer sings:* in the *Odyssey*, iv. 219–21: "Then Helen, daughter of Zeus, turned to new thoughts. Presently she cast a drug into the wine whereof they drank, a drug to lull all pain and anger, and bring forgetfulness of every sorrow"—Butcher and Lang's translation. ¶ 183. *eftsoons*=soon after.

(196) 242. *Lorrain:* Claude Lorrain (1600–82), the famous French landscape-painter. ¶ 243. *Rosa:* Salvator Rosa (1615?–73), the Italian landscape-painter, whose pictures have more wildness and dash, and less softness and serenity, than Claude's. *Poussin:* Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665), the celebrated French painter of landscapes and historical pieces.

(197) 263. *diapason*=the whole compass of the instrument (Greek *διά*, through, and *πᾶς*, all). ¶ 284. *mell*=mingle.

CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM

"Thomson was blessed with a strong and copious fancy; he hath enriched poetry with a variety of new and original images, which he painted from nature itself and from his own actual observations: his descriptions have therefore a distinctness and truth, which are utterly wanting to those of poets who have only copied from each other and have never looked abroad on the objects themselves. Thomson was accustomed to wander away into the country for days and for weeks, attentive to 'each rural sight, each rural sound,' while many a poet who has dwelt for years in the Strand has attempted to describe fields and rivers and generally succeeded accordingly. Hence that nauseous repetition of the same circumstances; hence that disgusting impropriety of introducing what may be called a set of hereditary images, without proper regard to the age or climate or occasion in which they were formerly

used. Though the diction of 'The Seasons' is sometimes harsh and inharmonious, and sometimes turgid and obscure, and though in many instances the numbers are not sufficiently diversified by different pauses, yet is this poem on the whole, from the numberless strokes of nature in which it abounds, one of the most captivating and amusing in our language and which, as its beauties are not of a transitory kind, as depending on particular customs and manners, will ever be perused with delight."—Joseph Warton, *An Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, Vol. I (1756).

"Did you never observe ('while rocking winds are piping loud') that pause, as the gust is recollecting itself, and rising upon the ear in a shrill and plaintive note, like the swell of an Æolian harp? I do assure you there is nothing in the world so like the voice of a spirit. Thomson had an ear sometimes; he was not deaf to this, and has described it gloriously, but gives it another different turn and of more horror. I cannot repeat the lines; it is in his 'Winter' [ll. 190–95 ?]."—Thomas Gray, in a letter to Stonehewer, June 29, 1760.

"The last piece that he lived to publish was 'The Castle of Indolence,' which was many years under his hand, but was at last finished with great accuracy. The first canto opens a scene of lazy luxury that fills the imagination."—Samuel Johnson, *The Lives of the English Poets* (1779–81).

EDWARD YOUNG

(197) Love of Fame, the Universal Passion.

(197) *A Proper Idler.* Satire IV. 67–86.

(198) 15. *assembly:* a social gathering. ¶ 17. *ombre:* a game at cards, in which two usually played against one.

(198) *A Polite Worshipper.* Satire VI. 21–36. ¶ 2. *Drury Lane:* Drury Lane Theatre, London.

(199) Night Thoughts.

(199) *Night, Sable Goddess.* Night I. 1–53. The poem was begun soon after Young had lost his wife, and others dear to him, by death.

(200) *The Thief of Time.* Night I. 370–97.

Contemporary Criticism

"Mr. Urban,—I doubt not but 'The Complaint' ["Night Thoughts"] and the author of it have raised your wonder. I think much more notice should have been taken of that excellent poem in your magazine. I am far from thinking myself fit to write encomiums upon it. I remember Alexander would be drawn by none but an Appelles, and carved only by a Phidias; and such a poem should be the subject of a sublime pen alone. . . . . I here make my offering: . . . .

> Thou awful, sacred bard, whoe'er thou art,
> That thus enchantest with thy midnight songs,
> And while enchanting dost instruct, accept
> This just but slender tribute. O how oft
> Have grief and joy alternate heaved this breast,
> And tears suffused my eyes, while o'er thy works
> My soul intent has roved! And sacred all.
> With thee my guide I 've ranged among the tombs,
> Where Death in sable pomp erects her trophies,
> Shunned as a gloomy place till now, but ah
> Thy lamp has turned the darkness into day."
>
> —"Marcus," in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, June, 1744.

"Dr. Young's description of night [p. 199] is beautiful in the highest degree, considered as a general description, and is equally so in whatever circumstances you suppose the writer to be. The images are strong, bold, and natural, whether they are put into the mouth of a murderer, a traveller, or a philosopher. It is not so with the celebrated speech of Macbeth [*Macbeth*, II. i. 49–56]; the chief beauty there arises from the peculiar circumstances of the

speaker at the time. . . . . I may therefore repeat, without injustice to Shakespear, that Dr. Young's description of night, considered merely as such, is much more natural and sublime than Shakespear's; and is not, I believe, to be equalled by any poet ancient or modern."—"H. L.," in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, February, 1774

ROBERT BLAIR

(201) THE GRAVE. Lines 1–27, 467–506. ¶ 1. *affect*=choose.

(202) 28–67. Cf. Bryant's "Thanatopsis," which was written soon after reading "The Grave."

SAMUEL JOHNSON

(203) LONDON. Subtitle, "In Imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal." Lines 1–18, 158–81. ¶ 7. *Cambria's:* "Cambria" was the Roman name for Wales. ¶ 8. *St. David:* the patron saint of Wales. ¶ 10. *the Strand:* a street in London; so called because it runs along the shore of the Thames.

(204) THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES. Subtitle, "In Imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal." Lines 1–20, 99–120, 191–222, 343–368. ¶ 21. *Wolsey:* Cardinal Wolsey (1471 ?–1530), prime minister of Henry VIII; he lost the favor of the king at the end of a long period of service, was deprived of his offices, and retired to his diocese; he was arrested soon after on a charge of high treason, but on the way to the Tower he became ill and died in an abbey.

(205) 44. *Swedish Charles:* Charles XII of Sweden (1682–1718). He brilliantly repelled the joint attack of Denmark, Poland, and Russia upon Sweden, and then assumed the aggressive, winning many victories; but, invading Russia, his army suffered severely in the terrible winter of 1708–9, and was routed at the battle of Pultowa the next summer. Charles spent three years in Turkey, trying to induce the Sultan to make war upon Russia; failing, he returned to Sweden, made peace with Russia, and invaded Norway for purposes of conquest; here, at the siege of Fredrikshall, a fortress which was considered the key of Norway, he was killed by a musket ball; it was long suspected that he was killed by a traitor in his own ranks (cf. "dubious hand," l. 72).

WILLIAM SHENSTONE

(206) THE SCHOOLMISTRESS. Stanzas 2, 3, 10, 16–23. "What particulars in Spenser were imagined most proper for the author's imitation on this occasion are his language, his simplicity, his manner of description, and a peculiar tenderness of sentiment remarkable throughout his works."—Prefatory "Advertisement." Shenstone's opinion of Spenser is expressed more fully in his *Essays on Men and Manners*, LIX: "The plan of Spenser's *Fairy Queen* appears to me very imperfect. His imagination, though very extensive, is yet somewhat less so, perhaps, than is generally allowed, if one considers the facility of realizing and equipping forth the virtues and vices. His metre has some advantages, though in many respects exceptionable. His good nature is visible through every part of his poem; his conjunction of the pagan and Christian scheme (as he introduces the deities of both acting simultaneously), wholly inexcusable. Much art and judgment are discoverable in parts, and but little in the whole. One may entertain some doubt whether the perusal of his monstrous descriptions be not as prejudicial to true taste as it is advantageous to the extent of imagination. Spenser, to be sure, expands the last; but, then, he expands it beyond its due limits. After all, there are many passages in his *Fairy Queen* which will be instances of a great and cultivated genius misapplied."

(207) 9. *shent*=put to shame, blamed. ¶ 31. *liefest*=most beloved (O. E. "leof," beloved; from same root as "love").

(208) 41. *'frays*=affrays, frightens. ¶ 43. *quaint*=crafty (from Latin "cognitus," from "cognoscere," to know, through Old French "cointe"). ¶ 47. *Eftsoons*=at once. ¶ 48–52. "Horn-book. The alphabet-book, which was a thin board of oak about nine inches long and five or six wide, on which was printed the alphabet, the nine digits, and sometimes the Lord's Prayer. It had a handle, and was covered in front with a sheet of thin horn to prevent its being soiled; the back-board was ornamented with a rude sketch of St. George and the dragon."—Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable.* ¶ 53. *thilk*=that same (O.E. "þylc"). ¶ 57. *the bard by Mulla's silver stream:* Edmund Spenser (1552–99); the Mulla ran near his castle in Ireland, where he wrote most of his *Faerie Queene.* ¶ 59. *Sighed as he sung·* cf. *The Faerie Queene*, I. iii. st. 2:

> And now it is empassioned so deepe
> For fairest Unaes sake, of whom I sing,
> That my frayle eies these lines with teares do steepe.

¶ 63. *ermilin*=ermine. ¶ 72. Cf. *The Faerie Queene*, I. iii. st. 1:

> Feele my hart perst with so great agony,
> When such I see, that all for pitty I could dy.

(209) 84. *uncouth*=unusual (O.E. "uncuð," unknown). ¶ 85. *amain*=strongly (literally, "in might"; from "a," a reduced form of "on," and "main," from O.E. "mægen," might). ¶ 98. *cates*=dainties (cf. "caterer").

Contemporary Criticism

"If the exploded words which render the English writers of Queen Elizabeth's days almost unintelligible to the present age are justly exploded, and totally disused in every other branch of literature, why, in the name of common sense, are they every now and then raised from the dead by our poets? . . . . Is the modern English, as it appears in the works of an Addison, a Swift, or a Bolingbroke, at all the worse for the want of such words as 'eftsoons,' 'wend,' 'rechless,' 'muchel,' 'eft,' 'erst,' and many thousands still more barbarous, and very justly condemned to those glossaries where they ought to rest in peace? If our authors would give us a good translation of Spenser's works into modern English, free from those unintelligible words and phrases which, to his misfortune, he was obliged to use, we are persuaded that admirable poet would be read by many who cannot endure the unpoetical harshness of his original language: nor indeed is his labored stanza at all agreeable to those who love ease in reading; it is mere slavery to many to preserve at once clear ideas of his sense and of the mechanism, order, and jingle of his versification and rhymes."—*The Monthly Review*, May, 1751. (The article is a review of an anonymous poem, "The Seasons," in imitation of Spenser: there is no reference to Shenstone by name.)

"The moral pieces have nothing in them very striking or remarkable, and might, perhaps, better have been omitted. We must, however, except the concluding poem of the 'Schoolmistress,' a piece universally and deservedly admired, and which is, to say the truth, fairly worth the whole collection. After the great and merited applause which Mr. Shenstone met with on account of this little imitation of Spenser, we are surprised to find nothing of the same nature occurring through all his works."—*The Critical Review.* May, 1764

WILLIAM COLLINS

Notes signed "C." are by Collins.

(209) Oriental Eclogues. *Eclogue the Second.* "Mr. Collins wrote his eclogues when he was about seventeen years old, at Winchester school, and, as I well remember, had just been reading that volume of Salmon's *Modern History* which described Persia; which determined him to lay the scene of these pieces [there], as being productive of new images and sentiments. In his maturer years he was accustomed to speak very contemptuously of them,

calling them his Irish Eclogues, and saying they had not in them one spark of orientalism."—Joseph Warton, in his edition of Pope (1797).

(210) 14. *Schiras':* Schiraz, formerly the capital of Persia, was a center of commerce. ¶ 38. "Thee" refers to "money" (l. 35) by a very abrupt change from the third person to the second; "only" goes with "thee." *yet*=still, after all. ¶ 40. *fond*=foolish.

(211) 71. *she:* supply "whom" as the object of "won." ¶ 73. *owned the pow'rful maid:* i. e., acknowledged the power of the maid.

(212) AN EPISTLE. Lines 17–78. Sir Thomas Hanmer, who had been Speaker of the House of Commons, brought out an edition of Shakspere in 1743–44. ¶ 3. *rage*=poetic frenzy. ¶ 6. *Phaedra's tortured heart:* the allusion is to Euripides' play of *Hippolytus*, in which Phaedra, wife of Theseus, is tortured by her love for Hippolytus, her stepson, which she is ashamed to confess. ¶ 7, 8. In a note Collins refers to the *Œdipus Rex* of Sophocles: Œdipus, King of Thebes, discovered that he had slain his father and married his mother; his mother hanged herself, and Œdipus, after putting out his eyes, became a wanderer. ¶ 14. *Menander's:* Menander (342–291 B. C.), the most famous of the writers of the "New Comedy" of Greece, was the model of the Roman comic dramatists, Plautus and Terence, in the second century B. C. ¶ 17. *Ilissus':* the Ilissus flowed through Athens, the home of Greek tragedy. ¶ 19. *As Arts expired:* i. e., at the downfall of the Roman Empire. ¶ 21. *Julius:* Julius II, pope from 1503 to 1513, was a patron of art and literature; he laid the foundation stone of St. Peter's, and was a friend of Raphael and Michael Angelo. *each exiled maid:* the Muses. ¶ 22. *Cosmo:* Cosmo de' Medici (1389–1464), one of the merchant princes of the Medici family who ruled Florence for many generations, was a magnificent patron of literature and art. *Etrurian shade:* Florence, which is in old Etruria. ¶ 24. *The soft Provençal:* the troubadours of the south of France, who wrote in the Provençal tongue, were as a rule dependent for support upon the nobles whose courts they frequented; early in the thirteenth century many of them left southern France, then impoverished by the War of the Albigenses, and found a welcome in Italy. *Arno's stream:* Florence is on the river Arno. ¶ 25. *wanton:* the word here seems to combine the meanings of "sportive" and "loose." ¶ 26. *love was all he sung:* this is not wholly true; the poetry of the troubadours also included didactic poems and tales of battle and adventure.

(213) 32. *Tuscan:* Florence is in Tuscany, which has nearly the same limits as old Etruria. ¶ 33. *Eliza's:* Elizabeth's. ¶ 39. *Jonson:* Ben Jonson (1573?–1637), Shakspere's friend and fellow dramatist. ¶ 41. *Fletcher:* John Fletcher (1579–1625), who, partly in conjunction with Francis Beaumont, wrote many plays. ¶ 48. This curious verdict shows the survival of the Restoration ideals of gallantry and sentiment, which found Shakspere inferior to the more courtly Beaumont and Fletcher in the portrayal of woman and of man's relation to her. Yet the line should not be taken to mean that Shakspere had absolutely no feeling for woman, but only that his chief interest was in those "ruder passions" which are characteristic rather of men than of women and are the staple of great tragedy. ¶ 55. *Corneille:* the greatest of the French classic dramatists; he was born in 1606 and died in 1684. *Lucan's spirit:* Lucan, the Roman poet (39–65 A. D.), wrote the *Pharsalia*, an epic on the war between Cæsar and Pompey; his style is energetic and sometimes sublime, and had a strong influence upon the style of Corneille. ¶ 57. *sweet Racine:* Racine (1639–99), less bold and energetic than Corneille, was a more even and polished writer. ¶ 58. *Maro's:* Virgil's. *chaster*=more correct and refined in style; the comparison is with Lucan's style. ¶ 60. *our poet's:* Shakspere's. ¶ 62. *truth:* i. e., life-likeness. *manners:* i. e., modes of thought, action, and speech by which characters are revealed; a common use of the word then.

(213) A SONG FROM SHAKESPEAR'S "CYMBELINE." See *Cymbeline*, IV. ii.

(214) ODE TO FEAR.

(215) 18. *allied:* i. e., to the phantoms of l. 16. ¶ 22. *that rav'ning brood of Fate:* "Alluding to the κύνας ἀφύκτους ["the hounds whom none may escape"] of Sophocles. See the *Electra* [l. 1388]."—C. ¶ 30. *he:* "Æschylus."—C. ¶ 31. Æschylus (525–456 B. C.) fought in the battles of Marathon, Salamis, and Platæa. ¶ 34. *later garlands:* Sophocles

was thirty years younger than Æschylus. ¶ 35. *Hybla's dews:* Hybla, a city of Sicily, was celebrated for the honey produced in its vicinity. Sophocles was called "the Attic bee" because of the pervading grace and sweetness of his art; the implication that he left his usual manner for a harsher one in *Œdipus Coloneus* is not true. ¶ 37. *baleful grove:* the scene of the play is the entrance to a grove, at Colonus, dedicated to the Furies; here the wanderings and life of Œdipus come to an end (see note on "An Epistle," ll. 7, 8, p. 470). ¶ 38. *thy cloudy veil:* the voice spoke from out a thunderstorm. *queen:* it was not Jocasta, the wife and mother of Œdipus, but a god.

(216) 59. *thrice-hallowed eve:* Hallowe'en, when fairies, imps, and witches are supposed to be especially active. ¶ 70. *cypress wreath:* here used as the crown of a tragic poet. ¶ 71. Cf. Milton's "Il Penseroso," l. 176.

(216) ODE TO SIMPLICITY.

(217) 10. *decent*=decorous, unpretentious. ¶ 11. *Attic robe:* cf. note on l. 21. ¶ 14. *Hybla's:* see note on "Ode to Fear," l. 35 (above). ¶ 16. *her:* the nightingale. ¶ 18. *sweetly sad Electra's poet's ear:* the allusion is to Sophocles, in whose *Electra* the title-character mourns for her murdered father, Agamemnon, saying that the plaintive nightingale is more pleasing to her than such as forget the death of their parents. ¶ 19. *Cephisus:* the largest river in Attica, flowing past Athens. ¶ 21. *thy green retreat:* Athens; the reference throughout stanzas 3 and 4 is to Greek literature, as without equal in simplicity. ¶ 23. *died:* when Alexander subjugated Greece, in 335 B. C. ¶ 32. *virtue's:* "virtue" here has its original meaning of "heroic manhood." ¶ 35. *one distinguished throne:* the throne of the Roman emperors, after the downfall of the republic. ¶ 37. *hall . . . . bow'r:* the great room and the private apartments of a castle. ¶ 41, 42. The thought is that the natural advantages of Italy cannot win back simplicity to her poetry while she lacks the more manly virtues.

(218) 48. *meeting soul:* cf. Milton's "L'Allegro," l. 138, "Such as the meeting soul may pierce."

(218) ODE ON THE POETICAL CHARACTER. ¶ 1. *As:* the comparison runs through l. 16. *regard*=attention. ¶ 3. *Him:* Spenser. ¶ 5–16. See *The Faerie Queene*, IV. v. st. 3. ¶ 8. *love-darting eye:* cf. Milton's *Comus*, l. 753, "Love-darting eyes, and tresses like the morn." ¶ 18. *whom:* Fancy. ¶ 19. *cest*=cestus, girdle. ¶ 23–40. "Probably the obscure idea that floated in the mind of the author was this, that true poetry, being a representation of nature, must have its archetype in those ideas of the Supreme Mind which originally gave birth to nature."—Mrs. Barbauld.

(219) 29. *the loved enthusiast:* Young Fancy (l. 17). ¶ 32. *sapphire throne:* the blue heavens; but they are the upper heavens, above the "tented sky" (l. 26) of this world. ¶ 39. *rich-haired Youth of Morn:* the sun. ¶ 40. *subject*=lying under. *was:* a grammatical error for "were." ¶ 46. *tarsel's:* the tarsel is the male falcon. ¶ 54. *This hallowed work:* the cestus; cf. ll. 17–21. ¶ 55–62. The cliff is a symbol of Milton's poetry, and even the details are symbolic; see especially ll. 56, 58, 59, 62. ¶ 57. *jealous steep:* i. e., a steep difficult of approach. ¶ 63. *that oak:* an allusion to Milton's "Il Penseroso," ll. 59, 60:

> While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke
> Gently o'er th' accustomed oak.

(220) 66. *sphered in heav'n:* i. e., in one of the spheres in which the heavenly bodies, according to the Ptolemaic astronomy, are fixed. ¶ 69. *Waller's myrtle shades:* the best poems of Edmund Waller (1605–1687) are his love poems, which in Collins' day were highly esteemed for their sweetness of versification; the myrtle was sacred to Venus. ¶ 72. *one alone:* Milton; cf. l. 5.

(220) ODE WRITTEN IN THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR 1746. At the battle of Fontenoy, May 11, 1745, in the War of the Austrian Succession, the English soldiers with dogged courage exposed themselves to a terrible fire, and their column was torn in pieces. At Preston Pans, September 21, 1745, and at Falkirk, January 17, 1746, the English troops were defeated by

the forces of the Young Pretender (grandson of James II), who claimed the throne of Great Britain. The ode may commemorate the English who fell in all these engagements.

(220) ODE TO EVENING. ¶ 1. *If:* the conclusion begins in l. 15. *aught of oaten stop:* i. e., anything played upon the shepherd's oaten pipe, with its stops or vent-holes.

(221) 7. *brede*=braid, embroidery. ¶ 9–12. Cf. *Macbeth*, III. ii. 40–43:

> ere the bat hath flown
> His cloistered flight, ere to black Hecate's summons
> The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums
> Hath rung night's yawning peal.

(222) 41. *wont*=is wont to do. ¶ 47, 48. A figurative expression of the fact that the twilight in winter is short, evening quickly giving place to night. ¶ 50. Collins apparently meant to suggest that evening is a favorable time for writing poetry receiving friends and studying; its connection with health is not obvious—indeed the reading in 1746 was "smiling Peace."

(222) THE PASSIONS. ¶ 11. *myrtles:* the myrtle was associated with Apollo and the Muses.

(223) 26. *sounds:* the construction is peculiar; "sounds" is either in apposition with "measures" or is governed by "with" understood. ¶ 35. The suggestion seems to be that Hope needs to be sustained by some response from without. ¶ 36. *her sweetest theme:* presumably, love; the poem contains three allusions to love, and perhaps this was the reason why Collins did not give the passion more prominence in any one place. ¶ 43. *denouncing*=announcing.

(224) 75. *oak-crowned sisters:* wood-nymphs, attendant on Diana, their "chaste-eyed queen." ¶ 86. *Tempe's vale:* a vale in Thessaly, Greece, famous for its beauty. ¶ 91. *her:* Mirth's. ¶ 92. *he:* Love.

(225) 114. *Cecilia's:* St. Cecilia was the reputed inventor of the organ.

(225) AN ODE ON THE POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS OF THE HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND. This ode was not published until 1788, when it was printed in the *Transactions* of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. Dr. Alexander Carlyle, a Scotch clergyman, in a letter to a member of the society, said: "The manuscript is in Mr. Collins's handwriting, and fell into my hands among the papers of a friend of mine and Mr. John Home's, who died as long ago as the year 1754. Soon after I found the poem, I showed it to Mr. Home, who told me that it had been addressed to him by Mr. Collins, on his leaving London in the year 1749; that it was hastily composed and incorrect; but that he would one day find leisure to look it over with care. Mr. Collins and Mr. Home had been made acquainted by Mr. John Barrow (the 'cordial youth' mentioned in the first stanza). . . . . I thought no more of the poem till a few years ago, when, on reading Dr. Johnson's *Life of Collins*, I conjectured that it might be the very copy of verses which he mentions, which he says was so much prized by some of his friends, and for the loss of which he expresses regret. I sought for it among my papers; and, perceiving that a stanza and a half were wanting, I made the most diligent search I could for them, but in vain. Whether or not this great chasm was in the poem when it first came into my hands, is more than I can remember at this distance of time." A few weeks after the publication of the poem in the *Transactions*, there came out, in London, what purported to be a perfect copy of the ode as revised by Collins; in the preface the editor said, "A gentleman who, for the present, chooses not to publish his name, discovered last summer the following admirable ode among some old papers, in the concealed drawers of a bureau, left him, among other articles, by a relation." Although challenged by *The English Review* and *The Monthly Review*, the editor never revealed his name or his evidence; but his version has usually been adopted, chiefly, it would seem, because of the natural desire of editors and publishers to print a complete text. It is here rejected as not genuine (for the reasons see the Athenaeum Press edition of Collins), but its readings are given in the notes.

Collins doubtless learned much from Home himself about Scotch superstitions, but he seems also to have read Martin's *Description of the Western Islands of Scotland;* see the Athenaeum Press edition of Collins for several close parallels.

(225) 1. *H———*: John Home, a Scotch clergyman; he came to London in 1749, with the tragedy of *Agis*, which Garrick refused. ¶ 4. This prophecy was fulfilled a few years later by the success of Home's tragedy, *Douglas*.

(226) 13. *whose:* anon. ed., "where." ¶ 16. *the:* anon. ed., "thy." ¶ 17. *own thy genial land:* i. e., acknowledge it as their country. ¶ 18. *Doric*=simple, natural; cf. l. 33. ¶ 23. *swart tribes:* Brownies. *bowl:* anon. ed., "bowls." ¶ 26. *herd*=herdsman. ¶ 39. *had*=would have. ¶ 41. *runic bards:* poets of the north lands, who wrote their poems in runes, the early alphabet of the northern peoples of Europe. ¶ 42. *uncouth*=strange, of unusual shape (O.E. "un," and "cuð," known). *vest*=vestment, garment.

(227) 48. *shiel:* "A kind of hut, built for a summer habitation to the herdsmen, when the cattle are sent to graze in distant pastures."—Note in *Transactions* edition. ¶ 51. *bony:* anon. ed., "brawny." ¶ 55. Anon. ed., "with Fate's fell spear." ¶ 56. *Uist's:* North and South Uist are islands in the Hebrides, near Sky. *forests:* anon. ed., "forest." ¶ 59. *strath:* a valley with a river running through it. ¶ 62. Anon. ed., "destined glance." ¶ 68. *heartless*=dismayed. ¶ 70–94. Anon. ed.:

To monarchs dear, some hundred miles astray,
  Oft have they seen Fate give the fatal blow!
  The seer, in Sky, shrieked as the blood did flow,
When headless Charles warm on the scaffold lay!
As Boreas threw his young Aurora forth,
  In the first year of the first George's reign,
And battles raged in welkin of the North,
  They mourned in air, fell, fell Rebellion slain!
And as, of late, they joyed in Preston's fight,
  Saw at sad Falkirk all their hopes near crowned,
They raved, divining, through their second sight,
  Pale, red Culloden, where these hopes were drowned!
Illustrious William! Britain's guardian name!
  One William saved us from a tyrant's stroke;
He, for a sceptre, gained heroic fame;
  But thou, more glorious, Slavery's chain hast broke,
To reign a private man, and bow to Freedom's yoke!

These, too, thou'lt sing! for well thy magic Muse
  Can to the topmost heav'n of grandeur soar!
  Or stoop to wail the swain that is no more!
Ah, homely swains! your homeward steps ne'er lose;
Let not dank Will mislead you to the heath:
  Dancing in mirky night, o'er fen and lake,
He glows, to draw you downward to your death,
  In his bewitched, low, marshy willow brake!

(228) 107. Anon. ed., "spot where hums the sedgy weed." ¶ 111. *bank:* anon. ed., "banks." ¶ 121–24. Cf. Gray's "Elegy," ll. 21–24 (p. 239). ¶ 125–32. Cf. Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, xi. 654–58:

Luridus, exsangui similis, sine vestibus ullis,
Conjugis ante totum miserae stetit: uda videtur
Barba viri, madidisque gravis fluere unda capillis.
Tum lecto incumbens, fletu super ora refuso,
Haec ait.

"Ghastly, like a bloodless corpse, without any clothing, he stood before the couch of his miserable wife. The man's beard appears wet, and a heavy stream flows from his dripping hair. Then, leaning over the couch, with tears poured over his face, he speaks thus." ¶ 127. *dropping:* anon. ed., "drooping." ¶ 135. *hapless:* anon. ed., "helpless." ¶ 137. *kelpie:* a water-spirit.

(229) 138. *style:* anon. ed., "skill." ¶ 150. *midnight's:* anon. ed., "midnight." ¶ 164. *sainted:* anon. ed., "scented." ¶ 173. *gentle:* i. e., educated, cultivated, belonging to a gentleman.

(230) 177. The anon. ed. supplies, "Flew to those fairy climes his fancy sheen," and in the next line changes the comma after "hour" to a semi colon. ¶ 178. *Sisters:* the witches in *Macbeth*. ¶ 181–83. See *Macbeth*, IV. i. ¶ 186. *colours:* anon. ed., "colour." ¶ 192–98. *Gerusalemme Liberata* ("Jerusalem Delivered"), by the Italian poet Tasso (1544–95), was "done into English heroical verse" by Edward Fairfax in 1600; the marvels referred to are described in Canto XIII, st. 41–43, 46. ¶ 202. Anon. ed., "Hence, at each picture, vivid life starts here!" ¶ 204. *num'rous:* anon. ed., "murm'ring," ¶ 207. *friths:* anon. ed., "splendid friths."

(231) 213. Anon. ed., "Or o'er your mountains creep, in awful gloom." ¶ 215. Ben Jonson journeyed afoot to Scotland, in 1618–19, to visit his friend, the poet William Drummond, at his estate of Hawthornden, near Edinburgh; the Teviot, or Tiviot (l. 216), and the Yarrow (l. 217) are not far away. *shade:* anon. ed., "classic shade." ¶ 216. *Tiviot's dale each:* anon. ed., "Tiviotdale each lyric flow'r." ¶ 217. *banks:* anon. ed., "banks, where Willy 's laid." ¶ 219. *Lothian's plains:* the county of Lothian, in which Edinburgh is situated. ¶ 220. Anon. ed., "Where'er Home dwells, on hill or lowly moor."

Contemporary Criticism

"Have you seen the works of two young authors, a Mr. Warton and Mr. Collins, both writers of odes? It is odd enough, but each is the half of a considerable man, and one the counterpart of the other. The first has but little invention, very poetical choice of expression, and a good ear; the second, a fine fancy, modelled upon the antique, a bad ear, great variety of words and images, with no choice at all. They both deserve to last some years, but will not."—Gray, in a letter to Wharton, December 27, 1746.

"If a luxuriance of imagination, a wild sublimity of fancy, and a felicity of expression so extraordinary that it might be supposed to be suggested by some superior power rather than to be the effect of human judgment or capacity, if these are allowed to constitute the excellence of lyric poetry, the author of the *Odes Descriptive and Allegorical* will indisputably bear away the palm from all his competitors in that province of the Muse."—*The Monthly Review*, January, 1764.

"He loved fairies, genii, giants, and monsters; he delighted to rove through the meanders of enchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repose by the water-falls of Elysian gardens. This was, however, the character rather of his inclination than his genius; the grandeur of wildness and the novelty of extravagance were always desired by him, but not always attained. Yet, as diligence is never wholly lost, if his efforts sometimes caused harshness and obscurity, they likewise produced in happier moments sublimity and splendor. This idea which he had formed of excellence led him to oriental fictions and allegorical imagery, and perhaps, while he was intent upon description, he did not sufficiently cultivate sentiment. . . . . His diction was often harsh, unskilfully labored, and injudiciously selected. He affected the obsolete when it was not worthy of revival; and he puts his words out of the common order, seeming to think, with some later candidates for fame, that not to write prose is certainly to write poetry. His lines commonly are of slow motion, clogged and impeded with clusters of consonants. As men are often esteemed who cannot be loved, so the poetry of Collins may sometimes extort praise when it gives little pleasure."—Samuel Johnson, *The Lives of the English Poets* (1779–81).

"Let Dr. Johnson, with all his erudition, produce me another lyric ode equal to Collins's on the 'Passions'; indeed the frequent public recitals of this last-mentioned poem are a mark of its universally acknowledged excellence."—"Philo-Lyrister," in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, January, 1782.

"His four eclogues are mere trash; yet a part of his odes will, notwithstanding, command

the admiration of mankind as long as poetical genius or poetical taste shall remain in the world."—"H.," in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, January, 1782.

"The favored child of Poesy, whose productions in every line bear the most indubitable stamp of that divine enthusiasm which characterizes genius."—"X.," in *The European Magazine*. August, 1785.

THOMAS GRAY

"I by no means pretend to inspiration, but yet I affirm that the faculty in question [that of writing poetry] is by no means voluntary. It is the result (I suppose) of a certain disposition of mind, which does not depend on oneself, and which I have not felt this long time. You, that are a witness how seldom this spirit has moved me in my life, may easily give credit to what I say."—Gray, in a letter to Wharton, June 18, 1758. "The language of the age is never the language of poetry, except among the French, whose verse, where the thought or image does not support it, differs in nothing from prose. Our poetry, on the contrary, has a language peculiar to itself, to which almost every one that has written has added something by enriching it with foreign idioms and derivatives, nay, sometimes words of their own composition or invention."—Letter to West, April, 1742. "Extreme conciseness of expression, yet pure, perspicuous, and musical, is one of the grand beauties of lyric poetry. This I have always aimed at, and never could attain; the necessity of rhyming is one great obstacle to it."—Letter to Mason, January 13, 1758. "The true lyric style, with all its flights of fancy, ornaments, and heightening of expression, and harmony of sound, is in its nature superior to every other style; which is just the cause why it could not be borne in a work of great length, no more than the eye could bear to see all this scene that we constantly gaze upon—the verdure of the fields and woods, the azure of the sea and skies—turned into one dazzling expanse of gems."—Letter to Mason, December, 1756.

Notes signed "G." are by Gray.

(231) ODE ON THE SPRING. ¶ 1. *rosy-bosomed Hours:* cf. Milton's *Comus*, l. 986, "The Graces and the rosy-bosomed Hours," and Homer's frequent epithet "rosy-fingered," applied to the dawn. ¶ 2–4. In classic mythology the Hours are represented as accompanying Venus, and, since they mark the flight of time, as bringing the changes of the season. ¶ 3. *expecting*=awaiting. ¶ 4. *the purple year:* cf. note on Pope's "Spring," l. 28 (p. 444). ¶ 5. *The Attic warbler:* the nightingale. The nightingale is so called because it was very common in Attica, and was often referred to in Greek literature and legend. *pours her throat:* cf. Pope, "An Essay on Man," III. 33, "Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat?"

(232) 27. Gray compares Virgil, *Georgics*, iv. 59, "Nare per aestatem liquidam," "To swim through the liquid summer." ¶ 29, 30. Gray compares *Paradise Lost*, VII. 405, 406:

> sporting with quick glance,
> Show to the sun their waved coats dropt with gold.

(232) ODE ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE. The gloom of the poem was due in part to personal circumstances: of Gray's three intimate friends, all Eton boys, one (West) had just died, and the other two (Walpole and Ashton) were estranged from him. ¶ 3. *Science:* Knowledge, Learning. ¶ 4. *Henry's holy shade:* Eton College was founded in 1440 by King Henry VI, who had a great reputation for piety.

(233) 5. *ye:* the spires and towers of Windsor Castle. ¶ 6. *Windsor's heights:* Windsor Castle is on the other bank of the Thames, nearly opposite Eton College. ¶ 28. *succeed:* succeed us "old boys." ¶ 32. *murm'ring labours ply:* study their lessons aloud. ¶ 33. *'Gainst graver hours:* in preparation for the hours of recitation in the school-room. ¶ 34. *To sweeten liberty:* i. e., by contrast.

(235) 79. Gray compares Dryden's "Palamon and Arcite," II. 582: "And Madness laughing in his ireful mood." ¶ 81. *years beneath:* the years of later life. ¶ 83. *family of*

Death: diseases which accompany death. ¶ 89. Cf. "Elegy Written in a Country Church-Yard," ll. 51, 52 (p. 240).

(235) HYMN TO ADVERSITY. Gray prefixed the following lines from Æschylus, *Agamemnon*, 173, 176–78:

> Ζῆνα . . . .
> Τὸν φρονεῖν βροτοὺς ὁδώ-
> σαντα, τῷ πάθει μαθὰν
> Θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν.

"Zeus . . . . who has guided mortals to wisdom and established knowledge by suffering to hold sure." ¶ 7. *purple tyrants:* cf. Horace, *Odes*, I. xxxv. 12, "Purpurei metuunt tyranni," "The purple tyrants fear"; "purple" refers to the purple robes worn by kings. ¶ 8. *pangs unfelt before:* cf. *Paradise Lost*, II. 703, "Strange horror seize thee and pangs unfelt before."

(236) 16. Cf. the *Æneid*, i. 630: "Non ignara mali miseris succurrere disco," "Not ignorant of evil, I learn to succor the wretched." ¶ 20. *leisure to be good:* cf. John Oldham (1653–83), "A Satire against Virtue," l. 119, "I have not yet the leisure to be good." ¶ 25–29. Cf. Milton's "Il Penseroso," ll. 35–44. ¶ 28. *leaden:* "Leaden-colored eye-sockets betoken melancholy, or excess of thoughtfulness."—Masson. May there not also be a suggestion of heaviness? ¶ 35. *Gorgon terrors:* the Gorgons were terrible maidens of Greek mythology, having brazen claws and enormous teeth and girded with serpents; one of them, Medusa, had serpents instead of hair, and the sight of her turned the beholder to stone. ¶ 36. *the vengeful band:* the Furies. ¶ 37. *impious:* Gray apparently used the word in its Latin sense of "lacking in due reverence for parents," with special reference to Orestes, who was pursued by the Furies because he killed his mother, Clytemnestra. ¶ 45, 46. See prefatory note on the preceding poem. ¶ 48. *know myself a man:* realize my fellowship with the human race through faults and suffering.

(237) SONNET ON THE DEATH OF RICHARD WEST. West was the dearest of Gray's early friends; they had been intimate at Eton, and they exchanged letters and poems almost to the day of West's death, on June 1, 1742; this sonnet was written in the following August. ¶ 3. *amorous descant:* cf. *Paradise Lost*, IV. 602, 603:

> all but the wakeful nightingale.
> She all night long her amorous descant sung.

A descant is a song with various modulations. ¶ 5. *other notes:* the verses which West was accustomed to send him, or perhaps merely the tones of his friend's voice.

(237) ODE ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT. The cat belonged to Gray's friend, Horace Walpole, with whom he was now reconciled. ¶ 16. *Tyrian hue:* see note on Pope's "Windsor Forest," l. 68 (p. 445).

(238) 31. *Eight times:* an allusion to the popular saying that a cat has nine lives. ¶ 34. *dolphin:* an allusion to the legend that Arion, the famous Greek musician, when forced to leap overboard, was carried ashore on the back of a dolphin which had been charmed by his music. ¶ 35. *cruel Tom nor Susan:* the servants, jealous of the favorite cat.

(238) ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD. Mason, Gray's friend, says, in his *Memoirs of Gray* (1775), that he is "inclined to believe" that the poem was begun in 1742, when Gray was living at Stoke Poges; it may have been suggested by the death of the poet's uncle in that year. It is possible, however, that the elegy was not begun until 1746; the poet was working on it in that year, anyway, as appears from a letter to Wharton. The death of his aunt, in 1749, probably caused Gray to resume the poem, which was finished the next year. Three autograph manuscripts of the poem are extant, and contain interesting variations. The editions printed during Gray's lifetime also vary from one another and from the manuscripts; the edition of 1768 is followed here, while some of the variant readings are given in the notes. The immediate popularity of the elegy appears from Gray's note appended to the Pembroke manuscript: "Publish'd in Febry: 1751, by Dodsley; & went thro four Editions, in two months; and afterwards a fifth, 6th, 7th, & 8th, 9th & 10th & 11th. Printed

also in 1753 with Mr. Bentley's Designs, of wch there is a 2d Edition & again by Dodsley in his Miscellany, Vol: 7th & in a Scotch Collection call'd *the Union*. Translated into Latin by Chr: Anstey Esq, & the Revd. Mr. Roberts, & publish'd in 1762; & again the same year by Rob: Lloyd, M:A:"

(238) 1. *parting*=departing, dying; cf. l. 89. Gray quotes Dante, *Divina Commedia* ("Purgatorio," VIII. 5, 6):

> squilla di lontano
> Che paia il giorno pianger che si more,

"a bell far off, which seems to mourn for the day that is dying." ¶ 2. *wind:* so in all the manuscripts, and in all printed editions supervised by Gray; "winds" occurs in the first edition, which he did not see through the press. Writing to Walpole about this edition, which was printed by Dodsley, Gray says, "Nurse Dodsley has given it a pinch or two in the cradle, that (I doubt) it will bear the marks of as long as it lives;" "winds" was evidently one of the pinches. *lea*=meadow. ¶ 5. Cf. Collins' "Ode to Evening," ll. 37–40 (p. 221). ¶ 6. *air:* the object of "holds." ¶ 7. Cf. *Macbeth*, III. ii. 42, "The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums;" and Collins' "Ode to Evening," ll. 11, 12 (p. 221).

(239) 9–16. The little church and graveyard at Stoke Poges, which Gray frequented, correspond closely to the description, but so do many others in rural England. ¶ 17. In the Mason manuscript, "Forever sleep; the breezy call of Morn." ¶ 20. *lowly bed:* not the grave, but the bed on which they slept when alive; cf. the reference to other objects in their daily life, in the next stanza. ¶ 21–24. Cf. Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, iii. 894–96:

> Jam jam non domus accipiet te laeta, neque uxor
> Optima nec dulces occurrent oscula nati
> Praeripere et tacita pectus dulcedine tangent.

"Now, now no more shall the glad home receive you, nor shall the excellent wife or sweet children run up to snatch kisses and touch the breast with silent sweetness." Cf. also Horace, *Epodes*, ii. 39 ff.:

> Quod si pudica mulier in partem juvet
> Domum atque dulces liberos, ...
> Sacrum et vetustis exstruat lignis focum
> Lassi sub adventum viri.

"But if a modest wife gives her share of aid with the home and the sweet children, ... and piles high the sacred hearth with old logs just before the arrival of her weary husband." Cf. also Thomson's "Winter" (1726), ll. 89–93 (p. 89). ¶ 33. *heraldry:* high descent; the word came to have this meaning from the fact that in the Middle Ages heralds were required to be learned in the genealogy of noble houses and their coats-of-arms. ¶ 35. *Awaits.* This is the reading in all the manuscripts and in the editions supervised by Gray; but "await" occurred in the reprint by Dodsley, in his *Collection of Poems* (1755), and was adopted by later editors, without authority, on the supposition that "boast," "pomp," and "all" are the subjects of the verb, whereas they are the objects and "hour" is the subject; this latter construction also makes the thought more natural and impressive, for Power, Beauty, and Wealth usually think little of their end, but the inevitable hour of death is nevertheless lying in wait for them. Cf. Horace, *Odes*, I. xxviii. 15, "Sed omnes una manet nox," "But one night waits for all." ¶ 33–36. Cf. the "Monody on the Death of Queen Caroline," written in 1737 by Gray's friend Richard West:

> Ah me! what boots us all our boasted power,
> Our golden treasure, and our purpled state?
> They cannot ward th' inevitable hour,
> Nor stay the fearful violence of Fate.

¶ 36. *paths:* the frequent misquotation, "path," destroys part of the significance of the line, which means that all the different paths of glory have one end—the grave. ¶ 39. *vault:* the arched roof of a church or cathedral. ¶ 41. *storied urn:* a burial urn, with an inscription

on it. *animated*=lifelike, looking as if the soul were within (Latin "animus," mind, soul). ¶ 43. *provoke*=call forth, arouse.

(240) 50. *spoils of time:* treasures gathered by knowledge through the ages. *unroll:* the earliest books were long rolls of parchment, which the reader unrolled as he read; cf. "ample page." ¶ 51. *rage*=enthusiasm. ¶ 52. *froze:* cf. "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College," ll. 88, 89 (p. 235). *genial:* "Giving spirit or life; enlivening; warming."—*The Century Dictionary.* (Latin "genius," from Old Latin "genere," to beget, produce.) ¶ 53–56. The idea had often been expressed before, though never expressed so well: "There is many a rich stone laid up in the bowels of the earth, many a fair pearl in the bosom of the sea, that never was seen nor never shall be."—Bishop Hall's *Contemplations* (1612–15).

Like beauteous flowers, which vainly waste the scent
Of odours in unhaunted deserts.
—William Chamberlayne's "Pharonnida" (1659), IV. v. 266, 267.

There kept my charms concealed from mortal eye,
Like roses that in deserts bloom and die.
—Pope's "Rape of the Lock" (1714), IV. 157, 158.

In distant wilds, by human eyes unseen,
She [Nature] rears her flowers and spreads her velvet green;
Pure gurgling rills the lonely desert trace,
And waste their music on the savage race.
—Young's "Love of Fame" (1726), V. 229–32.

Like woodlands flowers, which paint the desert glades,
And waste their sweets in unfrequented shades.
—Ambrose Philips' "Fable of Thule" (1748?), ll. 39, 40.

¶ 57–60. *Hampden . . . . Milton . . . . Cromwell:* in the Mason manuscript the names were Cato, Tully, and Caesar. John Hampden led in the resistance to the attempt of Charles I to collect an illegal tax called ship-money. ¶ 60. In the eighteenth century the popular conception of Cromwell was that he sacrificed his country to his ambition as general and ruler. ¶ 71, 72. A reference to the practice, still common in Gray's time, of writing fulsome poems to the rich and great to secure their patronage. After these lines, the Mason manuscript has the following stanzas:

The thoughtless world to majesty may bow,
  Exalt the brave, and idolize success
But more to innocence their safety owe
  Than pow'r and genius e'er conspired to bless.

And thou, who, mindful of th' unhonoured dead,
  Dost in these notes their artless tale relate,
By night and lonely contemplation led
  To linger in the gloomy walks of Fate,

Hark! how the sacred calm, that broods around,
  Bids ev'ry fierce tumultuous passion cease,
In still small accents whisp'ring from the ground
  A grateful earnest of eternal peace.

No more, with reason and thyself at strife,
  Give anxious cares and endless wishes room;
But through the cool sequestered vale of life
  Pursue the silent tenour of thy doom.

¶ 73. *Far from. . . . . strife:* i. e., they being far from the mad strife of the great world; the phrase should not be taken with "stray" in the next line. ¶ 78. *still*=now as before, habitually.

(241) 81. *spelt by th' unlettered Muse:* on the grave-stones at Stoke Poges are several misspellings, including one in the word "resurrection" in the inscription written by Gray for his aunt's tomb. ¶ 82. *elegy:* in the Mason manuscript, "epitaph"; the gain in accuracy is obvious, since the villagers did have epitaphs though rude ones. ¶ 84. *teach:* strictly the

word should be "teaches," but the thought in "many a holy text" is plural even if the form is not. ¶ 85. *For:* the thought goes back to line 80, as well as to line 84; it is not merely that the rustic is reluctant to die, but also that his fear of being utterly forgotten and dropped out of human sympathy is a main cause of his reluctance. *to dumb Forgetfulness a prey:* the words may be taken with "who," in which case "prey" should be understood as "about to become the prey," or they may be taken with "resigned"; the latter is the more natural, except for the rather awkward inversion, which, however, is quite in Gray's manner; in either case, the last line of the stanza must be taken with the second line, as well as with the third, to complete the thought. ¶ 92. In the Egerton manuscript, "And buried ashes glow with social fires." Gray compares Petrarch, Sonnet 169:

Ch' i veggio nel pensier, dolce mio fuoco,
Fredda una lingua, e due begli occhi chiusi
Rimaner dopo noi pien di faville.

"For I see in thought, my sweet flame, a cold tongue and two beautiful shut eyes remain after us, full of sparks." ¶ 95. *chance*=perchance. ¶ 100. *lawn:* a grassy field. In the Mason manuscript this stanza followed:

Him have we seen the greenwood side along,
While o'er the heath we hied, our labours done,
Oft as the woodlark piped her farewell song,
With whistful eyes pursue the setting sun.

¶ 115. *for thou canst read:* apparently the poet meant to suggest that the "hoary-headed swain" himself could not read. ¶ 116. *thorn:* hawthorn tree. In the Pembroke manuscript and in the third edition of 1751, there followed this stanza, which Mason, Gray's friend and biographer, says the poet omitted because he thought it was "too long a parenthesis in this place":

There scattered oft, the earliest of the year,
By hands unseen are showers of vi'lets found;
The redbreast loves to build and warble there,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground.

(242) 119. *Science:* Learning, Knowledge. *frowned not on his humble birth:* Gray's father, a worthless fellow, was a scrivener; his mother was a milliner, but had means enough to educate him at Eton and Cambridge. ¶ 120. The line is not opposed in thought to the preceding, but is continuous with it, for the melancholy here meant, like that in Milton's "Il Penseroso," is the scholar's meditativeness with an undercurrent of pleasing sadness. ¶ 121. *Large was his bounty:* cf. "all he had" (l. 123) and the story of the poor widow (Mark 12:41–44) who in giving two mites "did cast in all that she had." ¶ 127. *trembling hope:* Gray compares Petrarch, Sonnet 114, "paventosa speme," "fearful hope."

(242) THE PROGRESS OF POESY. Gray prefixed these lines from Pindar's second Olympic ode (ll. 152, 153):

Φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν· ἐς
Δὲ τὸ πᾶν ἑρμηνέων χατίζει.

"Having a voice for the wise; while for the mass they have need of interpreters." In the first edition the motto consisted of the first two words only, and was meant to apply to both "The Progress of Poesy" and "The Bard," which were published together: "The odes in question, as their motto shows, were meant to be 'vocal to the intelligent alone.'"—G., in a letter to Brown, February 17, 1763. In 1768, when Gray published the explanatory notes to the odes, he added the rest of the motto. "I am not quite of your opinion with regard to strophe and antistrophe. Setting aside the difficulties, methinks it has little or no effect upon the ear, which scarce perceives the regular return of metres at so great a distance from one another. To make it succeed, I am persuaded the stanzas must not consist of above nine lines each at the most. Pindar has several such odes."—Gray, in a letter to Wharton, March 9, 1755.

(242) 1. *Aeolian:* "Pindar styles his own poetry, with its musical accompaniments, Αἰολῆις μολπῆ, Αἰολίδες χορδαὶ, Αἰολίδων πνοαὶ αὐλῶν, Æolian song, Æolian strings, the breath of the Æolian flute. The subject and simile, as usual with Pindar, are united. The various sources of poetry, which gives life and luster to all it touches, are here described; its quiet majestic progress enriching every subject (otherwise dry and barren) with a pomp of diction and luxuriant harmony of numbers; and its more rapid and irresistible course, when swollen and hurried away by the conflict of tumultuous passions."—G. ¶ 10. *amain*=with force, violently. ¶ 13–24. "Power of harmony to calm the turbulent sallies of the soul. The thoughts are borrowed from the first Pythian of Pindar."—G. ¶ 14. *solemn-breathing airs:* cf. Milton's *Comus*, l. 555, "At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound." ¶ 15. *shell:* the lyre; according to legend, Hermes invented the lyre by stretching cords across a tortoise shell. ¶ 17. *On Thracia's hills:* Thrace was considered to be especially the domain of Mars, perhaps because the Thracians were so warlike.

(243) 21. *the feathered king:* Jove's eagle. ¶ 25–41. "Power of harmony to produce all the graces of motion in the body."—G. ¶ 27. *Idalia's:* Idalia was a town in Cyprus famous for the worship of Venus. ¶ 29. *Cytherea's:* Venus was called Cytherea from the island of Cythera, where she was fabled to have landed after arising from the foam of the sea. ¶ 35. Gray compares the *Odyssey*, viii. 265: Μαρμαρυγὰς θηεῖτο ποδῶν · θαύμαζε δὲ θυμῷ, "He gazed at the twinklings of the feet, and marveled in his heart." ¶ 41. Gray compares Phrynichus as quoted in Athenæus:

Λάμπει δ' ἐπὶ πορφυρέῃσι
Παρείῃσι φῶς ἔρωτος,

"On the purple cheeks shines the light of love." ¶ 42–53. "To compensate the real and imaginary ills of life, the Muse was given to mankind by the same Providence that sends the Day, by its cheerful presence, to dispel the gloom and terrors of the Night."—G. ¶ 52, 53. Gray compares Cowley's Pindaric ode, "Brutus" (1656), ll. 56, 57:

Or seen her [Morning's] well-appointed star
Come marching up the eastern hill afar.

¶ 54–65. "Extensive influence of poetic genius over the remotest and most uncivilized nations, its connection with liberty, and the virtues that naturally attend on it. (See the Erse, Norwegian, and Welsh fragments, the Lapland, and American songs.)"—G. ¶ 54. *beyond the solar road:* Gray compares the *Æneid*, vi, 796, "Extra anni solisque vias," "Beyond the paths of the year and the sun"; and also Petrarch, Canzone 2, "Tutta lontana dal camin del sole," "All distant from the road of the sun."

(244) 66–82. "Progress of poetry from Greece to Italy, and from Italy to England. Chaucer was not unacquainted with the writings of Dante or of Petrarch. The Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt had travelled in Italy, and formed their taste there; Spenser imitated the Italian writers; Milton improved on them; but this school expired soon after the Restoration, and a new one arose on the French model, which has subsisted ever since."—G. ¶ 66. *Delphi's steep:* Mt. Parnassus, in Greece, the fabled abode of the Muses; Delphi, where was the oracle of Apollo, lay at the base of the mountain. ¶ 67. *Ægean deep:* the sea between Greece and Asia Minor, covered with islands famous for their connection with the history and literature of Greece. ¶ 68. *Ilissus:* a river flowing through Athens. ¶ 69. *Mæander's:* the Mæander is a very winding river in Asia Minor, flowing into the Ægean Sea. ¶ 77. *Greece's evil hour:* when Grecian civilization deteriorated politically and morally; cf. ll. 79. 80. ¶ 84. *Nature's darling:* "Shakespeare."—G.

(245) 95. *he:* "Milton."—G. ¶ 95, 96. *rode sublime Upon the seraph wings:* cf. *Paradise Lost*, VI. 771, "He on the wings of cherub rode sublime." ¶ 98. Gray compares Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, i. 73, "flammantia moenia mundi," "the flaming walls of the world." ¶ 99. Gray compares Ezekiel 1:20, 26, 28, including the words, "a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone." ¶ 102. Gray compares the *Odyssey*, viii. 64: Ὀφθαλμῶν

μὲν ἄμερσε· δίδου δ' ἠδεῖαν ἀοιδήν, "She [the Muse] deprived him of his eyes, but gave him sweet song." ¶ 105, 106. "Meant to express the stately march and sounding energy of Dryden's rhymes."—G. *With necks in thunder clothed:* Gray compares Job 39:19, "Hast thou clothed his [the horse's] neck with thunder?" ¶ 115. *Theban:* Pindar was a native of Thebes. *Eagle:* "Pindar compares himself to that bird, and his enemies to ravens that croak and clamor in vain below, while it pursues its flight, regardless of their noise."—G. ¶ 120. *orient*=bright, shining, like the dawn.

(245) THE BARD. Gray worked at the ode by fits during the years 1754–57. The completion of it was due to the inspiration which the poet received from the songs of a blind Welsh harper who visited Cambridge in 1757: "Mr. Parry has been here and scratched out such ravishing blind harmony, such tunes of a thousand years old, with names enough to choke you, as have set all this learned body a-dancing, and inspired them with due reverence for Odikle ["The Bard"] whenever it shall appear. Mr. Parry (you must know) it was that has put Odikle in motion again, and with much exercise it has got a slender tail grown, like Scroddles, and here it is."—Gray, in a letter to Mason, May, 1757. Gray prefixed an "Advertisement": "The following ode is founded on a tradition current in Wales that Edward the First, when he completed the conquest of that country, ordered all the bards that fell into his hands to be put to death."

(245) 2. *Confusion*=defeat. ¶ 4. Gray compares *King John*, V. i. 72, "Mocking the air with colours idly spread."

(246) 5. *hauberk's:* "The hauberk was a texture of steel ringlets, or rings interwoven, forming a coat of mail, that sat close to the body, and adapted itself to every motion."—G. ¶ 8. *Cambria's:* Cambria was the Romans' name for Wales, from Welsh 'Cymru." ¶ 9. *crested pride:* Gray compares Dryden's *Indian Queen*, III. i, "the crested adders' pride" (see p. 14). ¶ 10. *the first Edward:* Edward I invaded Wales, for the complete conquest of it, in 1282. ¶ 11. *Snowdon's:* " 'Snowdon' was a name given by the Saxons to that mountainous tract which the Welsh themselves call *Craigian-eryri;* it included all the highlands of Caernarvonshire and Merionethshire, as far east as the river Conway."—G. ¶ 13. *Glo'ster:* "Gilbert de Clare, surnamed the Red, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford, son-in-law to King Edward."—G. ¶ 14. *Mortimer:* "Edmond de Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore. They both were Lords-Marchers, whose lands lay on the borders of Wales, and probably accompanied the king in this expedition."—G. ¶ 19, 20. "The image was taken from a well-known picture of Raphael, representing the Supreme Being in the vision of Ezekiel. There are two of these paintings (both believed original), one at Florence, the other at Paris."—G. ¶ 20. Gray compares *Paradise Lost*, I. 537, "Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind." ¶ 28. *soft Llewellyn's lay:* i. e., the lay about Llewellyn, a Welsh prince of mild and gentle spirit. ¶ 35. *Arvon's shore:* "The shores of Caernarvonshire opposite to the isle of Anglesey."—G. ¶ 40, 41. Gray compares *Julius Caesar*, II. i. 289, 290:

> As dear to me as are the ruddy drops
> That visit my sad heart.

(247) 48. "See the Norwegian ode ["The Fatal Sisters," p. 251] that follows."—G. ¶ 49. The "griesly band" of the spirits of the murdered poets here join in the terrible prophecy. ¶ 54. *Severn:* a river in Wales. ¶ 56. *an agonizing king:* "Edward the Second, cruelly butchered in Berkley Castle."—G. ¶ 57. *She Wolf of France:* "Isabel of France, Edward the Second's adulterous queen."—G. Shakspere (3 *Henry VI.*, I. iv. 111) has the same phrase. ¶ 59. "Triumphs of Edward the Third in France."—G. *be born:* supply "one" as the subject. ¶ 64. "Death of that king, abandoned by his children, and even robbed in his last moments by his courtiers and his mistress."—G. ¶ 67. "Edward, the Black Prince, dead some time before his father."—G. ¶ 70. "Magnificence of Richard the Second's reign."—G.

(248) 77–82. "Richard the Second . . . . was starved to death."—G. ¶ 83–86.

"Ruinous civil wars of York and Lancaster [1455–85]."—G. ¶ 87, 88. "Henry the Sixth, George Duke of Clarence, Edward the Fifth, Richard Duke of York, etc., believed to be murthered secretly in the Tower of London. The oldest part of that structure is vulgarly attributed to Julius Cæsar."—G. ¶ 89. *his consort's:* "Margaret of Anjou, a woman of heroic spirit, who struggled hard to save her husband and her crown."—G. Her husband, Henry VI, was deposed in 1461. *his father's:* "Henry the Fifth."—G. ¶ 90. *the meek usurper's holy head:* "Henry the Sixth very near being canonized. The line of Lancaster had no right of inheritance to the crown."—G. ¶ 91. *Above, below:* i. e., on the loom. ¶ 91, 92. *rose o snow . . . . her blushing foe.* "The white and red roses, devices of York and Lancaster."—G. ¶ 93. *The bristled Boar:* "The silver boar was the badge of Richard the Third; whence he was usually known in his own time by the name of 'the Boar.' "—G. *in infant gore:* in 1483 Richard murdered the two young princes (sons of Edward IV), who stood between him and the throne. ¶ 97–99. *to sudden fate . . . . half of thy Heart we consecrate.* "Eleanor of Castile died a few years after the conquest of Wales. The heroic proof she gave of her affection for her lord is well known. The monuments of his regret and sorrow for the loss of her are still to be seen at Northampton, Geddington, Waltham, and other places."—G. When Edward I had been wounded by a poisoned dagger, his queen saved his life, at peril of her own, by sucking the wound. ¶ 101. *Stay:* addressed by the living bard to the spirits of the dead bards, who are now leaving him. ¶ 109. "It was the common belief of the Welsh nation, that King Arthur was still alive in Fairy Land, and should return again to reign over Britain."—G. ¶ 110. *ye genuine kings, Britannia's issue:* "Both Merlin and Taliessin had prophesied that the Welsh should regain their sovereignty over this island; which seemed to be accomplished in the House of Tudor."— G. Henry VII, the first Tudor king, was grandson of Owen Tudor, a descendant of Welsh princes. "Britannia" is used in its strict sense, and refers to the Britons, who inhabited the island before the English; the Welsh are descended from the Britons. ¶ 112. *Sublime*=lifted up. *starry fronts:* cf. Milton's "Passion," l. 18, "His starry front low-roofed beneath the skies."

(249) 117. "Speed, relating an audience given by Queen Elizabeth to Paul Dzialinski, Ambassador of Poland, says, 'And thus she, lion-like rising, daunted the malapert orator no less with her stately port and majestical deporture than with the tartnesse of her princelie checkes.' "—G. ¶ 119. *strings symphonious:* the Elizabethan poetry. ¶ 121. *Taliessin:* "Taliessin, chief of the bards, flourished in the sixth century. His works are still preserved and his memory held in high veneration among his countrymen."—G. ¶ 125, 126. "'Fierce wars and faithful loves shall moralise my song' (Spenser, Proeme to *The Fairy Queen*)."—G. ¶ 127. An allusion to the allegory in *The Faerie Queene.* ¶ 128–30. "Shakespeare."—G. *buskined:* the buskin, or high-heeled shoe, stands for tragedy, because the Greek actors wore such a shoe when acting tragedy, to increase their height. ¶ 131. *A voice:* "Milton."—G. ¶ 133. *distant warblings:* "The succession of poets after Milton's time."—G. ¶ 134. "The meaning is only that it was lost to his ear from the immense distance. I cannot give up 'lost' for it begins with an 'l.' "—G., in a letter to Mason. ¶ 135. *Fond*=foolish. *impious man:* Edward I. ¶ 142. *To triumph:* i. e., ultimately, in the way indicated in ll. 109–38; the bard speaks for the Welsh people, not merely for himself.

(249) Ode on the Pleasure Arising from Vicissitude. "Vicissitude" is used in its correct sense of "change from one state to another." The poem was found, after Gray's death, in his notebook of the year 1754. It was unfinished: the third stanza is incomplete; and some fragmentary lines follow the last complete stanza. "I have heard Mr. Gray say that M. Gresset's 'Epître à ma Sœur' [1748] gave him the first idea of this ode."—Mason, *Poems of Mr. Gray.* The following lines are from Gresset's poem:

O jours de la convalescence!
Jours d'une pure volupté!
C'est une nouvelle naissance,
Un rayon d'immortalité. . . . .

Les plus simples objets, le chant d'une fauvette,
Le matin d'un beau jour, la verdure des bois,
La fraîcheur d'une violette;
Mille spectacles, qu'autrefois
On voyoit avec nonchalance,
Transportent aujourd'hui, presentent des appas
Inconnus à l'indifférence,
Et que la foule ne voit pas.

"O days of convalescence! days of pure delight! It is a new birth, a gleam of immortality. . . . . The simplest objects, the warbler's song, the morning of a fine day, the green of the woods, the freshness of a violet, a thousand sights which were before viewed carelessly, to-day transport, present charms which are unknown to indifference, and which the crowd fails to see."

(249) 3. *vermeil*=vermilion, bright red.

(250) 17–20. These lines were inserted in their present position by Mason; in Gray's notebook they were not with the other lines. ¶ 37. *Still*=always.

(251) 42. *Chastised*=chastened, subdued.

(251) THE FATAL SISTERS. "From the Norse tongue. In the *Orcades* of Thormodus Torfaeus, Hafniae, 1697, folio; and also in Bartholinus."—G. It is probable, however, that Gray had only a smattering of Norse (see Professor Kittredge's discussion of the point in Phelps's edition of Gray) and that his ode is based chiefly upon the Latin translation which accompanied the Norse text in the editions that he refers to above. (The Latin is printed by Phelps; and also by Tovey, with an English translation, in his edition of Gray.)

"In the eleventh century, Sigurd, Earl of the Orkney Islands, went with a fleet of ships and a considerable body of troops into Ireland, to the assistance of Sictryg with the silken beard, who was then making war on his father-in-law Brian, King of Dublin: the Earl and all his forces were cut to pieces, and Sictryg was in danger of a total defeat; but the enemy had a greater loss by the death of Brian, their king, who fell in action. On Christmas-day (the day of the battle), a native of Caithness in Scotland saw at a distance a number of persons on horseback riding full speed towards a hill, and seeming to enter into it. Curiosity led him to follow them, till, looking through an opening in the rocks, he saw twelve gigantic figures resembling women: they were all employed about a loom; and as they wove, they sung the following dreadful song; which when they had finished, they tore the web into twelve pieces, and (each taking her portion) galloped six to the north and as many to the south."—G. "The Valkyriur were female divinities, servants of Odin (or Woden) in the Gothic mythology. Their name signifies 'choosers of the slain.' They were mounted on swift horses, with drawn swords in their hands; and in the throng of battle selected such as were destined to slaughter, and conducted them to Valhalla, the hall of Odin, or paradise of the brave; where they attended the banquet, and served the departed heroes with horns of mead and ale."—G.

(251) 3. Gray compares *Paradise Regained*, III. 323, 324:

How quick they wheeled, and, flying, behind them shot
Sharp sleet of arrowy showers.

(252) 32. *the youthful king:* Sictryg; see Gray's prefatory statement above. ¶ 44. *a king:* Brian; see Gray's prefatory statement. ¶ 45. *Eirin*=Erin, Ireland.

(253) THE DESCENT OF ODIN. "From the Norse tongue. In Bartholinus, *De causis contemnendae mortis*, Hafniae, 1689, quarto."—G. The Norse poem is from the *Poetic Edda*, or collection of Old Norse poetry, and probably belongs to the thirteenth century. Gray seems to have based his ode chiefly upon the Latin translation which Bartholin appended to his edition of the Norse text (Phelps and Tovey, in their editions of Gray, give the Latin, and Tovey translates it.) Balder, the favorite son of Odin, had dreams that his life was in danger. Frigga, his mother, thereupon made all things swear not to hurt Balder; but she omitted the mistletoe, as too weak to be dangerous. Odin meanwhile descended to the lower world, to learn of an ancient prophetess what danger threatened his son.

(253) 4. *Hela's:* "Niflheimr, the hell of the Gothic nations, consisted of nine worlds to which were devoted all such as died of sickness, old age, or by any other means than in battle. Over it presided Hela, the Goddess of Death."—G. ¶ 17. Taken from Milton's "L'Allegro," l. 59. ¶ 22. *traced:* Phelps says that the original is equally vague, but that Gray probably meant that Odin wrote spells on the tomb of the prophetess; the Latin version has "Literas tumulo imposuit," "He placed letters on the tomb." *runic*=magic. The ancient alphabets of the peoples of northern Europe were called runes and magical power was often ascribed to them.

(254) 44. *bev'rage of the bee:* mead, a fermented drink made of honey. ¶ 55. *Hoder's:* Hoder was Balder's blind brother; the evil being Loki caused him to slay Balder, unwittingly, with the mistletoe; see Matthew Arnold's "Balder Dead."

(255) 75. *What virgins:* "Probably the Nornir [Norns, or Fates]. . . . . As their names signify Time past, present, and future, it is probable they were always invisible to mortals; therefore when Odin asks this question on seeing them, he betrays himself to be a god."—Mason. ¶ 86. *mother of the giant brood:* "In the Latin, 'mater trium gigantum.' He means, therefore, probably Angerbode, who, from her name, seems to be 'no prophetess of good,' and who bore to Loki, as the *Edda* says, three children, Wolf Fenris, the great Serpent of Midgard, and Hela, all of them called giants in that mythology."—Mason. Phelps thinks that the prophetess may be Hela herself. ¶ 90. *Lok:* "Lok is the Evil Being, who continues in chains till the Twilight of the Gods approaches when he shall break his bonds; the human race, the stars, and sun shall disappear, the earth sink in the seas, and fire consume the skies; even Odin himself and his kindred deities shall perish."—G.

(255) Sketch of His Own Character. The lines were written in 1761, and were found, after the poet's death, in one of his notebooks. ¶ 6. *Townshend:* Charles Townshend, a brilliant parliamentary orator, and secretary of war in the year when these lines were written; for his fickleness he was nicknamed "the weathercock." *Squire:* Samuel Squire, an English bishop, for whom Gray seems to have had some contempt (see his letter to Mason, No. 131 in Gosse's edition of Gray, and to Wharton, May 9, 1761).

Contemporary Criticism

"This excellent little piece [the "Elegy"] is so much read, and so much admired by everybody, that to say more of it would be superfluous."—*The Monthly Review*, February, 1751. "The 'Church-Yard Elegy' of Mr. Gray and the 'Elfrida' of Mr. Mason are pieces which show a power and height of genius equal to anything, if properly, that is if judiciously as well as warmly, cultivated."—*Ibid.*, August, 1752.

"I do not know why you should thank me for what you had a right and title to, but attribute it to the excess of your politeness, and the more so because almost no one else has made me the same compliment. As your acquaintance in the university (you say) do me the honour to admire, it would be ungenerous in me not to give them notice that they are doing a very unfashionable thing, for all people of condition are agreed not to admire, nor even to understand. . . . . Even my friends tell me they do not succeed, and write me moving topics of consolation on that head; in short, I have heard of nobody but a player [Garrick] and a doctor of divinity [Warburton] that profess their esteem for them. Oh yes! a lady of quality, a friend of Mason's, who is a great reader. She knew there was a compliment to Dryden, but never suspected there was anything said about Shakespeare or Milton, till it was explained to her; and wishes that there had been titles prefixed to tell what they were about."—G. in a letter to Bishop Hurd, August 25, 1757, referring to "The Progress of Poesy" and "The Bard."

"We with particular pleasure seize every opportunity of congratulating our country on the productions of real taste and genius. Mr. Gray has already entertained the public with some pieces of lyric poetry which in our opinion would not have disgraced the purest ages of antiquity; and we think the two odes now before us ["The Progress of Poesy" and "The Bard"] fully answer the expectation which the world had a right to form from the more early

specimens of his poetical talent. Here we not only find the charming variety and sweetness of versification, ... but also the fire, the wildness, and enthusiasm of Pindar. Perhaps he has imitated him too closely in affecting an obscurity of transition, though even this obscurity affords a kind of mysterious veil which gives a venerable and classical air to the performance. The first of these odes is addressed to the Æolian lyre, which it emulates in the enchanting softness, ravishing flow, and solemn tones of melody. . . . . A severe critic would likewise censure the sentiment in the next strophe or epode, which represents the Loves dancing to the sound of this lyre. Such an instrument as the Æolian harp, which is altogether uncertain and irregular, must be very ill adapted to the dance, which is one continued regular movement. . . . . The second ode is founded on a tradition current in Wales that Edward I, when he completed the conquest of that country, ordered all the bards that fell into his hands to be put to death. The subject is exquisitely chosen, and the piece executed by the hand of a master. . . . . What follows is all enthusiasm, ecstasy, and prophetic fury, that alarms, amazes, and transports the reader. . . . . The woes that attend Edward's descendants are introduced in such a manner as to excite surprise, terror, and admiration, and seem to be written in the true strain of an inspired sybil. . . . . The conclusion of this ode is wildly great and interesting. The bard, scorning to survive the slaughter of his friends and the ruin of his country, after having enjoyed his vision of revenge, throws himself from the rock on which he stood."—*The Critical Review*, August, 1757.

"As this publication ["The Progress of Poesy" and "The Bard"] seems designed for those who have formed their taste by the models of antiquity, the generality of readers cannot be supposed adequate judges of its merit; nor will the poet, it is presumed, be greatly disappointed if he finds them backward in commending a performance not entirely suited to their apprehensions. . . . . It is by no means our design to detract from the merit of our author's present attempt: we would only intimate that an English poet, 'one whom the Muse has marked for her own,' could produce a more luxuriant bloom of flowers by cultivating such as are natives of the soil than by endeavoring to force the exotics of another climate; or, to speak without a metaphor, such a genius as Mr. Gray might give greater pleasure and acquire a larger portion of fame, if, instead of being an imitator, he did justice to his talents, and ventured to be more an original. These two odes, it must be confessed, breathe much of the spirit of Pindar; but, then, they have caught the seeming obscurity, the sudden transition, and hazardous epithet of his mighty master; all which, though evidently intended for beauties, will probably be regarded as blemishes by the generality of his readers. . . . . The first of these poems celebrates the Lyric Muse. It seems the most labored performance of the two; but yet we think its merit is not equal to that of the second. It seems to want that regularity of plan upon which the second is founded; and though it abounds with images that strike, yet, unlike the second, it contains none that are affecting. . . . . The circumstances of grief and horror in which the Bard is represented, those of terror in the preparation of the votive web, and the mystic obscurity with which the prophecies are delivered, will give as much pleasure to those who relish this species of composition as anything that has hitherto appeared in our language, the odes of Dryden himself not excepted."—Oliver Goldsmith, in *The Monthly Review*, September, 1757.

"We agree with him [Goldsmith] that the 'Elegy Written in a Country Church-Yard' is overloaded with epithet."—*The Critical Review*, June, 1767.

"I have been reading Gray's works, and think him the only poet since Shakspeare entitled to the character of sublime. Perhaps you will remember that I once had a different opinion of him. I was prejudiced."—William Cowper, in a letter to Hill, April, 1777.

"The 'Prospect of Eton College' suggests nothing to Gray which every beholder does not equally think and feel. His supplication to father Thames to tell him who drives the hoop or tosses the ball, is useless and puerile. Father Thames has no better means of knowing than himself. . . . . To select a singular event, and swell it to a giant's bulk by fabulous appendages of sceptres and predictions, has little difficulty; for he that forsakes the probable

may always find the marvellous. And it has little use: we are affected only as we believe; we are improved only as we find something to be imitated or declined. I do not see that 'The Bard' promotes any truth, moral or political. . . . . In the second stanza the bard is well described; but in the third we have the puerilities of obsolete mythology. When we are told that 'Cadwallo hushed the stormy main,' and that 'Modred made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topped head,' attention recoils from the repetition of a tale that, even when it was first heard, was heard with scorn. . . . . The mind of the writer seems to work with unnatural violence. 'Double, double toil and trouble.' He has a kind of strutting dignity, and is tall by walking on tiptoe. His art and his struggle are too visible, and there is too little appearance of ease and nature. . . . . His translations of Northern and Welsh poetry deserve praise; the imagery is preserved, perhaps often improved, but the language is unlike the language of other poets. . . . . The 'Church-Yard' abounds with images which find a mirror in every mind, and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo. The four stanzas beginning, 'Yet even these bones,' are to me original: I have never seen the notions in any other place; yet he that reads them here persuades himself that he has always felt them. Had Gray written often thus, it had been vain to blame and useless to praise him."—Samuel Johnson, *The Lives of the English Poets* (1779–81).

MARK AKENSIDE

(256) The Pleasures of Imagination. Book I. 151–221. ¶ 1–33. The lines are based upon a passage in Longinus, *On Sublimity*, § 24. ¶ 4. Cf. *Hamlet*, I. iv. 56, "With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls."

(257) 47. *devious*=out of the path, wandering. ¶ 51–53. Akenside prints in a note a parallel passage from Leibnitz, *Théodicée*, Part I, § 19. ¶ 52. *empyreal waste:* the upper heaven, far above the sky that bends over the earth (Greek ἐν, in, πῦρ, fire; the ancients believed that pure fire was the element in the empyrean).

CHRISTOPHER SMART

(258) A Song to David. Lines 427–516.

(259) 20. *glede*=hawk. ¶ 24. *Xiphias*=the swordfish (Greek ξίφος, a sword). ¶ 26. *bastion's mole:* a bastion is a projecting part of a fortification; a mole is a heavy mass of earth-work or masonry. ¶ 28. *gier-eagle:* the vulture.

(260) 59. *alba's*=the pearl's (Latin "alba," white).

THOMAS WARTON

(261) The Pleasures of Melancholy. Lines 28–69, 153–65, 196–210. Cf. Milton's "Il Penseroso" as a whole. ¶ 4. Cf. Milton's *Comus*, l. 340, "With thy long levelled rule of streaming light." ¶ 19, 20. *airy voices talk Along the glimm'ring walls:* cf. Pope's "Eloisa to Abelard," l. 306, "And more than echoes talk along the walls." ¶ 36. *as Spenser saw:* see *The Faerie Queene*, III. xi, xii.

(262) 41. *All heav'n in tumult:* see *Paradise Lost*, Book VI. ¶ 42. The line is taken from *Paradise Lost*, VI. 110, with a change of "came" to "come." ¶ 48–50. See *The Faerie Queene*, I. iii, vi. ¶ 50–53. See Pope's "Rape of the Lock," II. 1 ff. (p. 93). ¶ 56–61. Cf. Milton's "Il Penseroso," ll. 155, 156, 161–66. ¶ 69. Cf. Milton's "Il Penseroso," l. 76, "Swinging slow with sullen roar."

(262) The First of April. Lines 5–34, 95–106.

(263) 27. *devious*=winding.

(264) To the River Lodon. The Lodon is a small river near Basingstoke, Warton's native place, in the south of England. ¶ 2. *with alders crowned:* cf. Pope's "Windsor Forest," l. 342, "The Loddon slow, with verdant alders crowned."

CHARLES CHURCHILL

(264) THE ROSCIAD. Lines 963–86. The title means "A Song about Roscius"; Roscius was a famous Roman actor, and his name came to be used for actors in general. The poem is a scathing criticism of contemporary London actors. James Quin, the actor satirized in this extract, was very successful, especially in Falstaff; his popularity finally waned before the growing splendor of Garrick's fame. ¶ 5. *Hector's lovely widow:* Andromache is a character in Ambrose Philips' *Distressed Mother*, adapted from Racine's *Andromaque*. ¶ 6. *Rowe's gay rake:* Lothario, in *The Fair Penitent* by Nicholas Rowe (1674–1708). ¶ 13. *Brute:* Sir John Brute, a character in Vanbrugh's *Provoked Wife*. ¶ 15. *"Cato's":* the reference is to Addison's tragedy of *Cato*.

(265) 24. *Horatio:* a young Genoese gentleman in Rowe's *Fair Penitent*. *Dorax:* a renegade Portuguese nobleman in Dryden's *Don Sebastian*. *Falstaff:* the great comic character in Shakspere's *Henry IV*.

(265) THE APOLOGY. Lines 314–87.

(266) 48. *Procrustes:* a robber of Greek legend, who laid all his prisoners on one bed; if they were too long for it, he cut off their limbs; if they were too short, he stretched them. ¶ 49. *Waller:* see note on Pope's "Spring," l. 46 (p. 444). ¶ 62. *Brent:* Charlotte Brent, an opera-singer very popular in London at this time.

(267) THE GHOST. Book II. 653–76. The poem gets its name from the celebrated Cock Lane ghost; and Samuel Johnson (Pomposo), as one of those who investigated the mysterious rappings, comes in for a share of the ridicule, which Churchill made the more severe in this case because Johnson was a Tory while he himself was an ardent Liberal.

WILLIAM FALCONER

(267) THE SHIPWRECK. Canto III. 605–747. The poem recounts an actual event, the poet's shipwreck near Cape Colonna, on the coast of Greece, in 1749.

(268) 23. *Maro's:* Virgil's. ¶ 30. *impervious*=impassable, i. e., too terrible for mortals to go through. ¶ 41. *Palemon:* the supercargo.

(269) 49. *unhappy chief:* Albert, the captain. ¶ 74. *Rodmond:* first mate. ¶ 86. *Arion:* the poet, who was second mate.

CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM

"Homer has been admired by some for reducing a catalogue of ships into tolerably flowing verse; but who, except a poetical sailor, the nursling of Apollo educated by Neptune, would ever have thought of versifying his own sea-language? What other poet would ever have dreamt of reef-tackles, hall-yards, clue-garnets, bunt-lines, lashings, lannyards, and fifty other terms equally obnoxious to the soft singsong of modern poetasters? . . . . Many of his descriptions are, in our opinion, not at all inferior to anything of the kind we meet with in the *Æneid*, many passages in the third and fifth books of which we conceive, nevertheless, our author has had in view. They have not suffered, however, by his imitation, and his pilot appears to much greater advantage than the Palinurus of Virgil."—*The Monthly Review*, September, 1762.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

(271) THE TRAVELLER. "Without espousing the cause of any party, I have attempted to moderate the rage of all. I have endeavored to show that there may be equal happiness in states that are differently governed from our own, that each state has a particular principle of happiness, and that this principle in each may be carried to a mischievous excess."—Dedicatory letter. ¶ 2. *Scheld:* a river flowing through Belgium and the Netherlands into the North Sea. *Po:* the great river of northern Italy, flowing east into the Adriatic Sea. ¶ 3. *Carinthian:* Carinthia is a mountainous district of Austria-Hungary; Goldsmith visited it in

1755, during his vagrant tour of the continent of Europe. ¶ 5. *Campania's:* Campania is a district in southern Italy. ¶ 13–22. Cf. "The Deserted Village," ll. 149–62 (p. 286).

(273) 84. *Idra's:* Idria (not Idra) is a town in Austria-Hungary famous for its quicksilver mines. *Arno's:* the Arno flows through Tuscany, one of the most fertile regions of Italy. *shelvy*=shelving, sloping gradually.

(274) 98. *peculiar pain:* pain proper to, peculiarly connected with, the excess of that particular good. ¶ 121. *gelid*=cool. ¶ 127. *manners:* morals.

(275) 144. *plethoric ill:* the ill attendant on a plethora, or superabundance (literally, excess of blood). ¶ 150. *paste-board triumph:* a procession or pageant, with pasteboard masks, etc.

(276) 190. *savage:* wild beast.

(277) 238. Cf. Pope's "Rape of the Lock," I. 66, "And sport and flutter in the fields of air." ¶ 253. *gestic*="Pertaining to action or motion, specifically to dancing."—*The Century Dictionary.*

(278) 276. *frieze:* a coarse woolen cloth. *copper-lace:* lace finished with copper, instead of the more costly silver or gold lace.

(279) 313–15. An allusion to the long and heroic struggle of the Netherlands against Spain (1567–1609), under the leadership of William of Orange and his son Maurice, by which the Dutch states gained their independence. ¶ 313. *Belgic:* the word is derived from "Belgae," the Romans' name for tribes which in the time of the Roman Empire occupied a large region including Belgium and the Netherlands; it does not here refer to Belgium, which did not join in the revolt of the Netherlands. ¶ 318. *the western spring:* an allusion to England's position in the west of Europe, in contrast to eastern Europe and to India, referred to in the next two lines. ¶ 319. *Arcadian:* Arcadia was a beautiful pastoral region in southern Greece. ¶ 320. *Hydaspis:* a river in India; it was famous as the scene of one of Alexander's victories, but still more for fabulous stories, as that it ran gold and jewels. ¶ 343–92. These lines, doubtless inspired in part by Johnson, were directed against John Wilkes and his faction. Wilkes was a political agitator, who in his paper, *The North Briton*, attacked the king's ministers and the message of the king himself; for the latter offense he was imprisoned, and later, for an indecent publication, he was expelled from Parliament and outlawed, shortly before "The Traveller" appeared; he became a popular hero, but was intolerable to a sturdy Tory and moralist like Johnson.

(281) 397–422. These lines are a "Deserted Village" in little. ¶ 403, 404. Cf. "The Deserted Village," ll. 65, 66 (p. 283). ¶ 411. *Oswego:* a river in New York state, flowing into Lake Ontario. ¶ 420, 429–34, 437, 438. These lines were written by Johnson; see Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson*, Globe ed., p. 173.

(282) 436. *Luke's iron crown:* George (not Luke) Dozsa headed a revolt in Hungary, in 1514, and was tortured by being seated on a red-hot iron throne and crowned with a red-hot iron crown, because he had let the peasants proclaim him king. *Damiens' bed of steel:* Robert François Damiens was tortured and then torn to pieces by four horses, for attempting the life of Louis XV, in 1757; the bed of steel was an ingenious device for prolonging his life and sufferings.

(282) THE DESERTED VILLAGE. "I know you will object (and indeed several of our best and wisest friends concur in the opinion) that the depopulation it deplores is nowhere to be seen, and the disorders it laments are only to be found in the poet's own imagination. To this I can scarcely make any other answer than that I sincerely believe what I have written; that I have taken all possible pains, in my country excursions, for these four or five years past, to be certain of what I allege; and that all my views and inquiries have led me to believe those miseries real which I here attempt to display."—Dedication to Sir Joshua Reynolds. "Not only did the enclosures of commons deprive the poor of valuable rights; but also enclosures in the sense of substitution of 'severalties' for the old 'champion' system admittedly led to the consolidation of farms, the eviction of small holders, and so . . . . to the ultimate increase of

poor rates. . . . In the end, of course, enclosures added to the general wealth of the country and thereby increased the demand for labor. But in the meantime they degraded small holders into landless laborers. . . . . It is a significant fact that in 1774 the Elizabethan Act was repealed which had aimed at securing to every cottage its four acres of ground attached. But indubitably the chief cause of the advance of pauperism in this period [1742–84] was the rise in prices as compared with wages."—*Social England*, ed. by H. D. Traill, Vol. V.

To the frequent queries whether "sweet Auburn" is the Irish village of Lissoy, the poet's early home, Forster's statement in his *Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith* (chap. vii) is a sufficient answer: "Scenes of the poet's youth had doubtless risen in his memory as he wrote, mingling with, and taking altered hue from, later experiences; . . . . . it is even possible that he may have caught the first hint of his design from a local Westmeath poet and schoolmaster, who in his youth had given rhymed utterance to the old tenant grievances of the Irish rural population; nor could complaints that were also loudest in those boyish days at Lissoy, of certain reckless and unsparing evictions by which one General Naper (Napper or Napier) had persisted in improving his estate, have passed altogether from Goldsmith's memory. But there was nothing local in his present aim; or if there was, it was the rustic life and rural scenery of England."

(283) 25. *simply:* in simple fashion.

(285) 122. *vacant:* empty of care. ¶ 142. *forty pounds:* this was a common salary for a curate in a small parish at that time; it was about twice the wages of a farm-laborer, and about a fourth less than the wages of a mason or carpenter. This sketch of the good preacher doubtless owes something to the poet's memories of his father and brother, and perhaps also to Chaucer's description of the "poor parson."

(287) 196. *the village master:* the teacher of the village school at Lissoy, "Paddy" Byrne, a retired quartermaster of an Irish regiment, no doubt furnished some elements of this portrait. ¶ 209. *terms:* the sessions of the law courts, which are determined in part by certain days, such as Easter, which shift their place in the calendar from year to year. *tides:* times and seasons, as Christmastide, Whitsuntide (the original meaning, from O.E. "tid," time, season). ¶ 210. *gauge:* measure the capacity of a barrel or keg.

(288) 231. *use:* perhaps to hide discolored places on the walls. ¶ 232. *The twelve good rules.* These rules, which were ascribed to Charles I, were as follows: "1. Urge no healths; 2. Profane no divine ordinances; 3. Touch no state matters; 4. Reveal no secrets; 5. Pick no quarrels; 6. Make no comparisons; 7. Maintain no ill opinions; 8. Keep no bad company; 9. Encourage no vice; 10. Make no long meals; 11. Repeat no grievances; 12. Lay no wagers." ¶ 248. *mantling bliss:* the cup of ale, covered with foam.

(290) 316. *artist*=artisan; here, a tailor. ¶ 322. *chariots:* coaches. *torches:* the streets of London were still so badly lighted that torches were commonly used at night. ¶ 330. *thorn:* the hawthorn bush. ¶ 344. *Altama:* the Altamaha, a river in Georgia; the colony of Georgia was founded in 1733, especially as a refuge for debtors and other distressed persons.

(292) 418. *Torno's cliffs:* probably the cliffs on Lake Tornea in the north of Sweden. *Pambamarca's:* Pambamarca is a mountain in Ecuador, South America. ¶ 427–30. These lines were written by Johnson; see Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson*, Globe ed., p. 174.

(293) RETALIATION. Lines 1–22, 29–42, 61–78, 93–124, 137–46. Among Garrick's manuscripts was found the following statement: "At a meeting of a company of gentlemen, who were well known to each other, and diverting themselves, among many other things, with the peculiar oddities of Dr. Goldsmith, who never would allow a superior in any art, from writing poetry down to dancing a hornpipe, the doctor, with great eagerness, insisted on trying his epigrammatic powers with Mr. Garrick, and each of them was to write the other's epitaph. Mr. Garrick immediately said that his epitaph was finished, and spoke the following distich extempore:

Here lies Nolly Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,
Who wrote like an angel, but talked like poor Poll.

Goldsmith, upon the company's laughing very heartily, grew very thoughtful, and either would not or could not write anything at that time; however, he went to work, and some weeks after produced the following printed poem, called 'Retaliation,' which has been much admired, and gone through several editions. The public in general have been mistaken in imagining that this poem was written in anger by the doctor; it was just the contrary; the whole on all sides was done with the greatest good humor."

(293) 1. *Scarron:* Paul Scarron (1610–60), a French burlesque poet and dramatist. ¶ 5. *Our Dean:* Thomas Barnard, Dean of Derry, Ireland. ¶ 6. *Burke:* Edmund Burke, the orator. ¶ 7. *Will:* William Burke, a cousin of Edmund. ¶ 8. *Dick:* Richard Burke, brother of Edmund. ¶ 9. *Cumberland's:* Richard Cumberland was a writer of popular sentimental plays. ¶ 10. *Douglas:* John Douglas, a Scotchman, Canon of Windsor. ¶ 11. *Garrick:* David Garrick, the actor. ¶ 14. *Ridge:* John Ridge, an Irish barrister. *anchovy:* a small fish of rich flavor. *Reynolds:* Sir Joshua Reynolds, the painter. *lamb:* see ll. 87–96. ¶ 15. *Hickey:* Tom Hickey, an Irish attorney. ¶ 28. *Townshend:* a member of Parliament and minor politician. ¶ 32. *nice:* particular, fastidious, intellectually and morally. ¶ 33. *a drudge:* i e., a party drudge, merely doing the will of his political superiors.

(294) 38. *Terence:* the famous writer of Roman comedies, living in the second century B. C. *mender of hearts:* see the following lines. ¶ 44. *rout:* a social assemblage.

(295) 77. *Kenricks:* William Kenrick, a reviewer and play-writer, was an enemy of Goldsmith. *Kellys:* Hugh Kelly was a writer of sentimental comedy, with whom Goldsmith had had some differences, while Garrick had taken him into favor. *Woodfalls:* William Woodfall was the publisher of *The Morning Chronicle.* ¶ 80. *be-Rosciused:* see note on Churchill's "Rosciad," p. 487. ¶ 86. *Beaumonts:* Francis Beaumont (1584–1616), in collaboration with John Fletcher, wrote many excellent plays. *Bens:* Ben Jonson (1573?–1637) was Shakspere's greatest contemporary in the drama. ¶ 94. *hard of hearing:* while studying the pictures in the Vatican, Reynolds caught a cold which resulted in deafness and obliged him to use an ear-trumpet. ¶ 95. *Correggios:* Correggio (1494–1534) was one of the most famous of the Italian painters contemporary with Raphael.

Contemporary Criticism

"The author already appears, by his numbers, to be a versifier, and by his scenery to be a poet; it therefore only remains that his sentiments discover him to be a just estimator of comparative happiness. . . . . Such is the poem ["The Traveller"], on which we now congratulate the public as on a production to which, since the death of Pope, it will not be easy to find anything equal."—*The Critical Review*, December, 1764. (Boswell attributes the article to Johnson.)

"'The Traveller' is one of those delightful poems that allure by the beauty of their scenery, a refined elegance of sentiment, and a correspondent happiness of expression. . . . . But though our author makes no great figure in political philosophy, he does not fail to entertain us with his poetical descriptions. . . . . We must now refer the reader to the poem itself, which we cannot but recommend to him as a work of very considerable merit."—*The Monthly Review*, January, 1765.

"That luxury is at present depopulating our country, not only by preventing marriage, but driving our villagers over the western ocean, we may perhaps be disposed to deny with the best and wisest of Dr. Goldsmith's friends, but we do not therefore read his poem with the less pleasure. As a picture of fancy it has great beauty; and if we shall occasionally remark that it is nothing more, we shall very little derogate from its merit. . . . . In this extract [ll. 1–48] there is a strain of poetry very different from the quaint phrase and forced construction into which our fashionable bards are distorting prose. . . . . This [ll. 57–74] is fine painting and fine poetry, notwithstanding the absurdity of supposing that there was a time when England was equally divided among its inhabitants by a rood to a man: if it was possible that such an equal division could take place, either in England or any other coun-

try, it could not continue ten years; wherever there is property, there must of necessity be poverty and riches. . . . . This passage [ll. 97–112] though it is fine, is fanciful. Does he who retires into the country to crown 'a youth of labor with an age of ease' use no knife, eat no sugar, and wear neither shirt nor breeches? If he does, for him the mine must be explored, the deep tempted, and 'the pale artist ply the sickly trade.' The following description of the parish priest would have done honor to any poet of any age." —*The Monthly Review* June, 1770, in a review of "The Deserted Village."

"This is a very elegant poem, written with great pains, yet bearing every possible mark of facility. In our last number we gave an extract from it containing the picture of a country curate; we shall now present the public with the description of a country schoolmaster and a village ale-house, which we think particularly picturesque."—*The London Magazine*, June, 1770.

JAMES BEATTIE

(295) THE MINSTREL. Book I. xix-xxii, xxxii-xxxv, liii–lv. "The design was to trace the progress of a poetical genius, born in a rude age, from the first dawning of fancy and reason till that period at which he may be supposed capable of appearing in the world as a minstrel. . . . . I have endeavored to imitate Spenser in the measure of his verse, and in the harmony, simplicity, and variety of his composition. Antique expressions I have avoided. . . . . To those who may be disposed to ask what could induce me to write in so difficult a measure, I can only answer that it pleases my ear, and seems, from its Gothic structure and original, to bear some relation to the subject and spirit of the poem. It admits both simplicity and magnificence of sound and of language, beyond any other stanza that I am acquainted with. It allows the sententiousness of the couplet as well as the more complex modulation of blank verse. What some critics have remarked, of its uniformity growing at last tiresome to the ear, will be found to hold true only when the poetry is faulty in other respects."—Preface.

THOMAS CHATTERTON

(298) BRISTOWE TRAGEDIE. Stanzas 1–3, 54–88, 92–98. "Bristowe" is an early form for "Bristol." The historical basis of the ballad is probably the execution of Sir Baldwin Fulford, at Bristol, in 1461, during the Wars of the Roses; Fulford, a partisan of the house of Lancaster, had opposed the claim of Edward IV to the throne of England. ¶ 2. *han*=has.

(300) 63. *enshone*=showed. *moe*=more. ¶ 71. *weedes*=garments. ¶ 72. *plyghte*=condition. ¶ 78. *Echone*=each one. ¶ 79. *of*=by. *Henrie's:* the reference is to Henry VI, who had recently been deposed and whom Edward IV had succeeded—illegitimately, as the Lancastrians believed.

(301) 85. *moe*=more. ¶ 105. *mynsterr*=minster, cathedral.

(302) 135. *Gloucester:* the Duke of Gloucester, afterward Richard III. ¶ 138. *Ne*=no.

(303) 160. *stroke*=struck. ¶ 169. *Kynwulph-hylle:* "So called from Kenwulf, king of Mercia, and probably the same spot which still bears the name of King's Down, a very eminent part of the city."—Dean Milles. ¶ 173. *Powle's*=Paul's.

(303) THE ACCOUNTE OF W. CANYNGES FEAST. William Canynge was the imaginary friend and patron of the imaginary poet-priest Rowley, to whom Chatterton attributed most of his poems in imitation of poetry of the fifteenth century; this poem, however, he ascribes to Canynge. ¶ 1. *han*=has. ¶ 2. *Byelecoyle*=fair welcoming. *beseeme*=appear.

(304) 4. *snoffelle*=snuff up. *cheorte*=cheerful, pleasant. ¶ 6. *Swotelye*=sweetly. ¶ 7. *Syche*=so. *coyne*=keen. ¶ 9. *Heie stylle*=they still, i. e., when the minstrels became silent. *ne*=nothing. ¶ 11. *echone*=each one, every. *deene*=dine. ¶ 12. *Gyf*=if. *Iscamm . . . Tyb. Gorges:* other imaginary friends of Canynge.

(304) MYNSTRELLES SONGE. From "Ælla." ¶ 1. *boddynge*=budding. ¶ 2. *mees*=meadows. *sprenged*=sprinkled. ¶ 4. *nesh*=tender. ¶ 5. *enlefed*=leafed out. *straughte*=stretched. ¶ 6. *whestlyng*=whistling. *dynne*=din, noise. ¶ 8. *roddie*=ruddy. *welkynne*=welkin, sky. ¶ 9. *ale-stake:* a stake with a bush of twigs at the top, projecting from the front of an ale-house as a sign. ¶ 15. *alleyne*=alone. ¶ 16. *the kynde*=the species; here, womankind.

(305) 19. *blake*=bleak, bare. ¶ 20. *guylteynge*=gilding. ¶ 23. *woddie*=woody? ¶ 24. *levynne*=lightning. *lemes*=gleams. ¶ 25. *rudde*=ruddy. ¶ 26. *fructyle*=fruitful. ¶ 27. *peres*=pears. *die*=dye, color. ¶ 30. *hartys*=heart's. *steynced*=stained. ¶ 31. *wrogte*=wrought, made. *neidher*=neither. *kynde*=sex. ¶ 32. *chafe*=chafing, warm. ¶ 33 *Dheere*=there. ¶ 35. *botte*=but. *tere*=muscle. ¶ 39. *ynutylle membere*=useless member, i. e., Adam's rib. ¶ 42. *kynde*=nature. ¶ 43. *Albeytte*=albeit. *pheeres*=mates. ¶ 44. *salvage kynde*=savage species, i. e., wild animals. *slea*=slay. ¶ 45. *efte*=often. *cheres*=cheers. ¶ 46. *Tochelod*=joined? dowered with? *heie*=they. ¶ 47. *swythyn*=quickly. ¶ 48. *bante*=cursed. *hie*=highly.

(306) O, SYNGE UNTOE MIE ROUNDELAIE. From "Ælla." ¶ 3. *ne moe*=no more. *hallie daie*=holiday. ¶ 4. *reynynge*=running. ¶ 8. *cryne*=hair (Latin "crinis," hair). ¶ 9. *rode*=skin. ¶ 10. *Rodde*=ruddy. ¶ 11. *Cale*=cold. ¶ 15. *Swote*=sweet. ¶ 17. *Defte hys taboure:* i. e., he was skilful in playing on the tabor; the tabor was a stringed instrument somewhat like a guitar. *codgelle stote*=cudgel stout. ¶ 31. *yanne*=than (cf. "ye" for "the").

(307) 38. *Nee*=not. *hallie*=holy. ¶ 39. *celness*=coldness. ¶ 43. *dente*=fasten. ¶ 44. *gre*=grow. ¶ 45. *Ouphant*=elfin. ¶ 53. *nete*=night. ¶ 57. *reytes*=water-flags. ¶ 58. *yer*=your. *leathalle*=deadly.

(307) AN EXCELENTE BALADE OF CHARITIE. Subheading, "As wroten bie the gode prieste Thomas Rowleie, 1464." "Thomas Rowley, the author, was born at Norton Malreward, in Somersetshire, educated at the convent of St. Kenna, at Keynesham, and died at Westbury, in Gloucestershire."—Chatterton. ¶ 1. *In Virgynè:* in that part of the zodiac called the Virgin, which the sun enters in August. ¶ 2. *mees*=meads. ¶ 3. *rodded*=reddened. ¶ 4. *mole*=soft (Latin "mollis," soft). ¶ 5. *peede*=pied, variegated. *chelandri*=goldfinch. ¶ 7. *defte*=neat. *aumere*=mantle.

(308) 10. *arist*=arose. ¶ 13. *Hiltring*=hiding. *attenes*=at once. *fetyve*=festive. ¶ 15. *holme:* a kind of oak. ¶ 16. *Seyncte Godwine's covent:* "It would have been *charitable* if the author had not pointed at personal characters in this 'Ballad of Charity.' The abbot of St. Godwin's at the time of writing of this was Ralph de Bellomont, a great stickler for the Lancastrian family. Rowley was a Yorkist."—Chatterton. ¶ 17. *moneynge*=moaning. ¶ 18. *viewe*=appearance. *ungentle*=not like that of a gentleman, beggarly. *weede*=dress. ¶ 19. *bretful*=brimful. ¶ 20. *almer*=receiver of alms, beggar. ¶ 22. *glommèd*=gloomy, clouded, dejected. ¶ 23. *forwynd*=dry, sapless. ¶ 24. *church-glebe-house*=the grave ("glebe"=soil, ground). *ashrewed*=accursed. ¶ 25. *kiste*=chest, coffin. *dortoure*=sleeping. ¶ 26. *Cale*=cold. *gre*=grow. ¶ 27. *aminge*=among. ¶ 30. *forswat*=sunburnt. *smethe*=smoke. *drenche*=drink. ¶ 31. *ghastness*=ghastliness, terror. *pall*=appal. ¶ 33. *flott*=fly. ¶ 34. *levynne*=lightning. ¶ 35. *smothe*=steam, vapors. *lowings*=flashings. ¶ 36. *clymmynge*=noisy. ¶ 37. *Cheves*=moves. *embollen*=swelled. ¶ 39. *gallard*=frighted. ¶ 40. *swanges*=swings. ¶ 42. *braste*=burst. *attenes*=at once. *stonen*=stony.

(309) 45. *chapournette:* "A small round hat, not unlike the shapournette in heraldry, formerly worn by ecclesiastics and lawyers."—Chatterton. ¶ 46. *pencte*=painted. ¶ 47. *He aynewarde tolde his bederoll:* "He told his beads backwards; a figurative expression to signify cursing."—Chatterton. ¶ 49. *mist*=poor. ¶ 50. *cope*=cloak. *Lyncolne clothe:* a green cloth, made particularly well in the town of Lincoln. ¶ 52. *autremete:* "A loose white robe worn by priests."—Chatterton. *twynne*=twine. ¶ 53. *shoone*=shoes. *pyke*=peaked. *loverds*=lord's. ¶ 55. *trammels:* shackles used to make a horse amble. ¶ 56. *horse-millanare:* "In a public part of Bristol, full in sight of every passer-by, was a sadler's

shop, over which was inscribed . . . . 'horse-milliner.' On the outside of one of the windows of the same operator stood . . . . a wooden horse dressed out with ribbons, to explain the nature of horse-millinery."—Stevens, writing of a visit in 1776. ¶ 57. *droppynge*=drooping. ¶ 63. *yatte*=that. *crouche*=crucifix. ¶ 66. *faitour*=a vagabond. ¶ 69. *shettynge*=shooting. ¶ 72. *reyneynge*=running. ¶ 74. *jape:* "A short surplus worn by friars of an inferior class and secular priests."—Chatterton. ¶ 75. *limitoure:* a friar licensed to beg within a certain limited area. *of order:* i. e., as to his order.

(310) 81. *groate:* a coin worth four pence. ¶ 82. *mister*=poor. *halline*=joy. ¶ 83. *eathe*=ease. ¶ 84. *nete*=naught. ¶ 85. *unhailie*=unhappy. ¶ 86. *Scathe*=scarce. ¶ 87. *semecope:* a short under-cloak. ¶ 89. *aborde*=went on. ¶ 90. *gloure*=glory. ¶ 91. *mittee* =mighty.

Contemporary Criticism

"On our first opening these poems, the smooth style of the harmony, the easy march of the verse, the regular station of the caesura, the structure of the phrase, and the cast and complexion of the thoughts made us presently conclude that they were mock ruins. If such they are, their merit is of no high estimation, it being as easy for a person accustomed to versification, and acquainted with obsolete terms, to fabricate an old poem as to write a new one; but if, on the contrary, they are really productions of the fifteenth century, they are the most extraordinary literary curiosities that this or any recent period has produced, for they would show us that the graces of numbers and the refinements of poetical melody are of no modern date, but belonged to one of the first adventurers in English poesy."—*The Monthly Review*, April, 1777.

"In these sentiments all readers of taste, even in these days, must agree with Master Lidgate when they peruse these truly classic poems, especially those capital performances, 'The Dethe of Syr Charles Bawdin,' . . . . 'Ælla, a Tragycal Enterlude,' 'Goddwyn, a Tragedie,' and 'The Battle of Hastings,' all which, for pure poetry, simplicity, and solid sense, as well as harmony, may vie with the most elegant and harmonious of the moderns. And this last is certainly the most suspicious circumstance, as, with all their merit, all our other old bards, from Chaucer down to Donne, are in that particular so defective that many of their verses are mere prose and others hardly legible. Scarce one such line occurs in Rowley, scarce one but what Pope or Dryden, bating the old words, might have written and owned. . . . . In this same 'Battle' the picturesque variety in the deaths, descriptions, similes, etc., we cannot help observing, will not suffer by a comparison with the like imagery in the Greek or Roman epic, any more than 'Ælla' and 'Goddwyn,' with their sublime choruses (especially the 'Fragment to Freedom'), will be degraded by being classed with the most perfect models of the ancient or modern drama. . . . . On the whole, if Rowley was the author of these poems (and what modern who had such a talent would have buried it in the rubbish of obsolete words?), poetry arrived at maturity near two centuries sooner than has been hitherto apprehended."—*The Gentleman's Magazine*, June, 1777.

WILLIAM COWPER

"My sole drift is to be useful; a point which, however, I knew I should in vain aim at unless I could be likewise entertaining. I have therefore fixed these two strings upon my bow, and by the help of both have done my best to send my arrow to the mark. My readers will hardly have begun to laugh before they will be called upon to correct that levity and peruse me with a more serious air. As to the effect, I leave it alone in His hands Who can alone produce it: neither prose nor verse can reform the manners of a dissolute age, much less can they inspire a sense of religious obligation, unless assisted and made efficacious by the Power Who superintends the truth He has vouchsafed to impart."—Letter to Mrs. Cowper, October 19, 1781, about his first volume of poems. "If I trifle [as in "John Gilpin"] and merely trifle, it is because I am reduced to it by necessity—a melancholy, that nothing else so effectu-

ally disperses, engages me sometimes in the arduous task of being merry by force. And, strange as it may seem, the most ludicrous lines I ever wrote have been written in the saddest mood, and but for that saddest mood perhaps had never been written at all."—Letter to Unwin, November 18, 1782. "I considered that the taste of the day is refined, and delicate to excess, and that to disgust the delicacy of taste by a slovenly inattention to it would be to forfeit at once all hope of being useful; and for this reason, though I have written more verse this last year than perhaps any man in England, I have finished, and polished, and touched and retouched, with the utmost care."—Letter to Unwin, October 6, 1781. "I know that the ears of modern verse-writers are delicate to an excess, and their readers are troubled with the same squeamishness as themselves; so that if a line do not run as smooth as quicksilver they are offended. A critic of the present day serves a poem as a cook serves a dead turkey when she fastens the legs of it to a post and draws out all the sinews. For this we may thank Pope; but unless we could imitate him in the closeness and compactness of his expression as well as in the smoothness of his numbers, we had better drop the imitation, which serves no other purpose than to emasculate and weaken all we write. Give me a manly, rough line, with a deal of meaning in it, rather than a whole poem full of musical periods that have nothing but their oily smoothness to recommend them!"—Letter to Johnson, his publisher, undated. "My descriptions [in "The Task"] are all from nature: not one of them second-handed. My delineations of the heart are from my own experience: not one of them borrowed from books, or in the least degree conjectural. In my numbers, which I have varied as much as I could (for blank verse without variety of numbers is no better than bladder and string), I have imitated nobody, though sometimes perhaps there may be an apparent resemblance, because at the same time that I would not imitate I have not affectedly differed. . . . . Except the fifth book, which is rather of a political aspect, the whole has one tendency: to discountenance the modern enthusiasm after a London life, and to recommend rural ease and leisure, as friendly to the cause of piety and virtue."—Letter to Unwin, October 10, 1784.

(310) THIS EVENING, DELIA, YOU AND I. "Delia" was the poet's cousin, Theodora Cowper; she returned his love, but her father forbade the marriage.

(311) TABLE TALK. Lines 610–55. ¶ 20. *Circe:* an enchantress of Greek legend, who turned men into swine; see the *Odyssey*, x. 210 ff.

(312) TRUTH. Lines 131–70. ¶ 9. *lappet-head:* "A head-dress made with lappets, or lace pendants."—*The Century Dictionary.*

(313) 38. *Brahmins:* Hindu priests.

(313) ON THE LOSS OF THE ROYAL GEORGE. Subheading, "Written when the news arrived." While the "Royal George" was being refitted at Spithead, off the southern coast of England, August 29, 1782, the shifting of her guns made her suddenly heel over and sink; of the thousand sailors, marines, officers, and visitors aboard, about eight hundred, including Admiral Kempenfelt, were drowned.

(314) THE TASK.

(314) *Rural Sights and Sounds.* Book I. 154–209.

(316) *Human Opression.* Book II. 1–47. ¶ 1. Cf. Jer. 9:2: "Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people." ¶ 16. *frith*= a narrow arm of the sea. ¶ 20. *devotes*=gives over by a vow (Latin "devovere," to vow); here, gives over to destruction.

(317) 40. *Slaves cannot breathe in England:* Lord Mansfield, in 1772, had given a decision to this effect.

(317) *The Model Preacher.* Book II. 395–413. ¶ 15. *rostrum*=pulpit.

(318) *Cowper, the Religious Recluse.* Book III. 108–33. ¶ 1. *a stricken deer:* Cowper's first attack of insanity, in which he tried three times to commit suicide, occurred in 1763–65; it necessitated permanent withdrawal from the profession of the law, on which he had entered, and a retired life in the country for the rest of his days.

(318) *The Arrival of the Post.* Book IV. 1–41.

(319) 25–27. These lines were evidently written before the news reached England that the treaty of peace between England and America had been signed in Paris, in September, 1783; "The Task" was begun in the summer of that year. ¶ 28–30. Clive and Hastings had recently been laying the foundation of England's empire in India, partly by acts which aroused the indignation of justice-loving Englishmen and brought Hastings to trial before the House of Lords in 1788.

(319) *Winter Scenes in the Country.* Book V. 21–57. ¶ 2. *bents*=stiff, wiry grasses.

(320) 26. *lurcher:* a hunting dog, a cross between a shepherd-dog and a greyhound.

(320) *The Bastile.* Book V. 379–445. ¶ 4, 5. See Exod. 20:2.

(321) 22–25. See Dan. 4:10–15.

(322) 66. *the Manichean God:* Manicheism, an old Babylonish nature religion modified by Christian elements, taught that the Evil Principle was coeternal with the Good Principle and that it made man.

(322) *Set Not Thy Foot on Worms.* Book VI. 560–80.

(323) On the Death of Mrs. Throckmorton's Bullfinch. The Throckmortons, a cultivated family of Roman Catholics, were neighbors of Cowper at Olney, with whom he had much pleasant companionship. ¶ 7. *Rhenus*=the Rhine.

(324) On the Receipt of My Mother's Picture. "I have lately received from a female cousin of mine in Norfolk, ... a picture of my own mother. She died when I wanted two days of being six years old; yet I remember her perfectly, find the picture a strong likeness of her, and, because her memory has been ever precious to me, have written a poem on the receipt of it: a poem which, one excepted, I had more pleasure in writing than any that I ever wrote."—Letter to Mrs. King, March 12, 1790.

(325) 14. *lost so long:* fifty-two years before.

(326) 53. *the pastoral house:* the rectory, where Cowper was born, in the town of Great Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire. ¶ 67. *humour*=whims, caprice.

(327) 97. The line is quoted incorrectly from Garth's "Dispensary" (1699), III. 226, "Where billows never break, nor tempests roar." ¶ 98. *thy loved consort:* Cowper's father died in 1756. ¶ 108. *My boast is not:* Cowper means that, although it is the fact, he does not boast of it; on his mother's side he was descended from several noble houses, and through them from Henry III.

(327) The Castaway. The poem is based on an incident in Lord George Anson's *Voyage round the World* (1748), which Cowper had read years before. The poet's state of mind, due to his insane delusion that he had lost the favor of God forever, will be seen in the following extract from his letter to Newton, written on April 11, 1799, three weeks after writing the poem: "If it [a book Newton had sent him] afforded me any amusement, or suggested to me any reflections, they were only such as served to embitter, if possible, still more the present moment by a sad retrospect to those days when I thought myself secure of an eternity to be spent with the spirits of such men as He Whose life afforded the subject of it. But I was little aware of what I had to expect, and that a storm was at hand which in one terrible moment would darken, and in another still more terrible blot out, that prospect forever."

(328) 19. *had*=would have.

Contemporary Criticism

"He says what is incontrovertible, and what has already been said over and over, with much gravity, but says nothing new, sprightly, or entertaining, travelling on a plain, level, flat road, with great composure, almost through the whole long and tedious volume, which is little better than a dull sermon, in very indifferent verse, on Truth, the Progress of Error, Charity, and some other grave subjects."—*The Critical Review*, April, 1782.

"He is a poet *sui generis;* for as his notes are peculiar to himself, he classes not with any known species of bards that have preceded him; his style of composition, as well as his modes of thinking, are entirely his own. The ideas with which his mind seems to have been

either endowed by nature or to have been enriched by learning and reflection, as they lie in no regular order, so are they promiscuously brought forth as they accidently present themselves. Mr. Cowper's predominant turn of mind, though serious and devotional, is at the same time dryly humorous and sarcastic. Hence his very religion has a smile that is arch, and his sallies of humor an air that is religious; and yet, motley as is the mixture, it is so contrived as to be neither ridiculous nor disgusting. His versification is almost as singular as the materials upon which it is employed. Anxious only to give each image its due prominence and relief, he has wasted no unnecessary attention on grace or embellishment; his language, therefore, though neither strikingly harmonious nor elegant, is plain, forcible, and expressive."—*The Monthly Review*, October, 1782.

"The relish for reading poetry had long since left me; but there is something so new in the manner, so easy and yet so correct in the language, so clear in the expression yet concise, and so just in the sentiments, that I have read the whole with great pleasure, and some of the pieces more than once. I beg you to accept my thankful acknowledgements, and to present my respects to the author."—Benjamin Franklin, in a letter to John Thornton, May 8, 1782. (Thornton, a friend of Cowper's friend William Unwin, had sent Franklin a copy of Cowper's first volume.)

"Seldom have we seen the *utile* and the *dulce* so agreeably united. . . . . The poet of nature and humanity, and the minstrel of the groves, the rural strains of Mr. Cowper, in particular, emulate those of Thomson and Shenstone in the most glowing imagery of rural description, and the warmest sensibility of a good heart. . . . . The reader may observe that the blank verse of this writer has more harmony and variety than are usually found in modern performances, being founded apparently on the best models, on those of Milton and Philips. The sound, too, is often most strikingly an echo of the sense."—*The Gentleman's Magazine*, December, 1785, in a review of "The Task."

"An eminent writer has said that all men, at one time or other of their lives, are poets. That unfortunate moment has accordingly been laid hold of; and many, who might have lived respected as good citizens and men of sense, proclaim themselves dunces for the sake of being ranked in the number of poets. . . . . While we are thus heavily taxed by dullness and vanity, we have a singular pleasure in announcing to the public the works of a poet of the first rank. From the former volume of Mr. Cowper's poems, in 1782, there was every reason to expect works of a higher nature, nor have the public been disappointed. Whatever pleasure results to the reader of taste from the effusions of fancy, the liveliest strokes of a fine imagination, whatever embellishment philosophy and sound sense can receive from elegant versification, from vigorous and well-adapted metaphor, is to be found in 'The Task.' . . . . The whole consists of reflections and strictures, serious, humorous, satirical, and moral, each subject introducing the next with seeming ease. Few topics of public notoriety have escaped his notice. His poetry, consequently, puts on various shapes, being descriptive, pathetic, familiar, and didactic, according to the present subject. With regard to the merit of the whole, it is that of uniform excellence, in the perusal of which the reader is led on imperceptibly and every subject begets an impatience for that which is to succeed."—*The English Review*, April, 1786.

"Mr. Cowper possesses strong powers of ridicule, and nature formed him for a satirist of the first order. He sees folly under every disguise, and knows how to raise a laugh at her expense, either by grave humor or more sportive raillery. He is alive to every feeling of compassion, and spares none that violate the laws of humanity. . . . . The great defect of the present poem is a want of unity of design. It is composed of reflections that seem independent of one another, and there is no particular subject either discussed or aimed at. . . . . An imagination like Mr. Cowper's is not to be controlled and confined within the bounds that criticism prescribes. We cannot, however, avoid remarking that his Muse sometimes passes too suddenly from grave and serious remonstrance to irony and ridicule. The heart that is harrowed and alarmed in one line is not prepared to smile in the next. . . . . But the defects

of this poem bear a very small proportion to its beauties; and its beauties are of no common account. They are happily conceived and forcibly expressed. Its language is the natural and unforced result of his conceptions; and though it is sometimes careless and prosaic, and seldom rich or ornamented, yet it is vigorous and animated, and carries the thought home to the heart with irresistible energy."—*The Monthly Review*, June, 1786.

'How do you like Cowper? Is not 'The Task' a glorious poem? The religion of 'The Task,' bating a few scraps of Calvinistic divinity, is the religion of God and nature, the religion that exalts, that ennobles man."—Robert Burns, in a letter to Mrs. Dunlop, December 25, 1795.

ROBERT FERGUSSON

For the meaning of words see Glossary to Scotch Poems, p. 509.

(329) THE DAFT DAYS. The days so called are Christmas, the last day of the year, New Year's Day, and the first Monday of the year, which were celebrated with wild festivity.

(330) 19. *Auld Reikie:* Edinburgh; so called from its smoke. ¶ 35. *Spa:* a watering-place in Belgium, famous for its medicinal springs.

(331) 45. *Italian tricks:* Italian tunes and modes of playing; cf. Burns, "The Cotter's Saturday Night," l. 115 (p. 356). ¶ 48. "*Tullochgorum*": an old Scotch tune; see p. 335 for the most famous words to it.

(333) ODE TO THE GOWDSPINK.

(334) 45. *Like Tantalus:* "Moreover, I beheld Tantalus in grievous torment, standing in a mere, and the water came nigh unto his chin. And he stood straining as one athirst, but he might not attain to the water to drink of it; for often as that old man stooped down in his eagerness to drink, so often the water was swallowed up and it vanished away."—*Odyssey*, xi. 582 ff., Butcher and Lang's translation. ¶ 56. *lauds:* a part of the morning service of the Roman Catholic Church; so called from the psalms of praise (Pss. 148–50) which form a part of the service.

ROBERT BURNS

"Though it cost the schoolmaster some thrashings, I made an excellent English scholar; and by the time I was ten or eleven years of age I was a critic in substantives, verbs, and particles. In my infant and boyish days, too, I owe much to an old woman who resided in the family, remarkable for her ignorance, credulity, and superstition. She had, I suppose, the largest collection in the country of tales and songs concerning devils, ghosts, fairies, brownies, witches, warlocks, spunkies, kelpies, elf-candles, dead-lights, wraiths, apparitions, cantraips, giants, enchanted towers, dragons, and other trumpery. This cultivated the latent seeds of poetry; but had so strong an effect on my imagination that to this hour, in my nocturnal rambles, I sometimes keep a sharp look-out in suspicious places. . . . . The first two books I ever read in private, and which gave me more pleasure than any two books I ever read since, were *The Life of Hannibal* and *The History of Sir William Wallace;* . . . . the story of Wallace poured a Scottish prejudice into my veins which will boil along there till the flood-gates of life shut in eternal rest. . . . . What I know of ancient story was gathered from Salmon's and Guthrie's *Geographical Grammars;* and the ideas I had formed of modern manners of literature and criticism I got from *The Spectator*. These, with Pope's works, some plays of Shakespeare, *Tull and Dickson on Agriculture*, *The Pantheon*, Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Stackhouse's *History of the Bible*, Justice's *British Gardener's Directory*, Boyle's *Lectures*, Allan Ramsay's works, Taylor's *Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin*, *A Select Collection of English Songs*, and Hervey's *Meditations*, had formed the whole of my reading [at sixteen]. The collection of songs was my *vade mecum*. I pored over them, driving my cart or walking to labor, song by song, verse by verse, carefully noting the true, tender, or sublime from affectation and fustian. I am convinced I owe to this practice much of my critic-craft, such as it is. . . . . My life flowed on much in the same course till my

twenty-third year. 'Vive l'amour, et vive la bagatelle,' were my sole principles of action. The addition of two more authors to my library gave me great pleasure; Sterne and Mackenzie—*Tristram Shandy* and *The Man of Feeling*—were my bosom favorites. Poesy was still a darling walk for my mind, but it was only indulged in according to the humor of the hour. I had usually half a dozen or more pieces on hand; I took up one or other, as it suited the momentary tone of the mind, and dismissed the work as it bordered on fatigue. My passions, when once lighted up, raged like so many devils till they got vent in rhyme; and then the conning over my verses, like a spell, soothed all into quiet."—Letter to Dr. Moore, August 2, 1787. "For my own part, I never had the least thought or inclination of turning poet till I got once heartily in love, and then rhyme and song were in a manner the spontaneous language of my heart. The following composition ["O, once I loved a bonie lassie"] was the first of my performances. . . . . The seventh stanza has several minute faults; but I remember I composed it in a wild enthusiasm of passion, and to this hour I never recollect it but my heart melts, my blood sallies, at the remembrance."—*Commonplace Book*, 1783–85. " 'Laddie lie near me,' must lie by me for some time. I do not know the air; and until I am master of a tune, in my own singing (such as it is), I can never compose for it. My way is: I consider the poetic sentiment correspondent to my idea of the musical expression; then choose my theme; begin one stanza; when that is composed, which is generally the most difficult part of the business, I walk out, sit down now and then, look out for objects in nature round me that are in unison or harmony with the cogitations of my fancy and workings of my bosom, humming every now and then the air, with the verses I have framed. When I feel my Muse beginning to jade, I retire to the solitary fireside of my study, and there commit my effusions to paper, swinging at intervals on the hind legs of my elbow chair, by way of calling forth my own critical strictures, as my pen goes on. Seriously, this, at home, is almost invariably my way."—Letter to Thomson, September, 1793. "All my poetry is the effect of easy composition but of laborious correction."

For the meaning of words see Glossary to Scotch Poems, p. 509.

(338) My Nanie, O. "As I have been all along a miserable dupe to love, and have been led into a thousand weaknesses and follies by it, for that reason I put the more confidence in my critical skill in distinguishing foppery and conceit from real passion and nature. Whether the following song will stand the test, I will not pretend to say, because it is my own; only I can say it was, at the time, real."—Burns's *Commonplace Book*. ¶ 1. *Lugar:* "Stinchar" in all editions published during the poet's lifetime; but in a letter to Thomson (October 20, 1792) he says, "The name of the river is horribly prosaic," and suggests "Girvan" and "Lugar" as substitutes, adding, "Girvan is the river that suits the idea of the stanza best, but 'Lugar' is the most agreeable modulation of syllables."

(339) The Holy Fair. " 'Holy Fair' is a common phrase in the west of Scotland for a sacramental occasion."—Burns. "The satire is chiefly concerned with the 'tent-preaching' outside the church while the communion services went on within. In Mauchline the preaching-tent was pitched in the church-yard, whence a back entrance gave access to Nanse Tinnock's tavern; and the sacrament was observed once a year, on the second Sunday in August."—Henley and Henderson. The stanza is an old one in Scotch poetry: it is a simplified form of the stanza in "Christ's Kirk on the Green," of the fifteenth century; and in a modernized version of that poem, published in 1706, the stanza is the same that Burns uses. ¶ 1–54. Cf. Fergusson's "Leith Races," ll. 1–45:

In July month, ae bonny morn,
  Whan Nature's rokelay green
Was spread o'er ilka rigg o' corn,
  To charm our roving een,
Glouring about I saw a quean,
  The fairest 'neath the lift;
Her een ware o' the siller sheen,
  Her skin like snawy drift,
    Sae white that day.

Quod she, "I ferly unco sair
That ye sud musand gae,
Ye wha hae sung o' Hallow-fair,
Her winter's pranks and play,
Whan on Leith-Sands the racers rare,
Wi' jocky louns, are met,
Their orrow pennies there to ware,
And drown themsel's in debt
Fu' deep that day."

"And wha are ye, my winsome dear,
That takes the gate sae early?
Whare do ye win, gin ane may spier,
For I right meikle ferly
That sic braw buskit laughing lass
Thir bonny blinks shou'd gi'e,
An' loup like Hebe o'er the grass,
As wanton and as free,
Frae dule this day."

"I dwall amang the caller springs
That weet the Land o' Cakes,
And aften tune my canty strings
At bridals and late-wakes.
They ca' me Mirth; I ne'er was kend
To grumble or look sour,
But blyth wad be a lift to lend,
Gif ye wad sey my pow'r
An' pith this day."

"A bargain be 't; and, by my feggs,
Gif ye will be my mate,
Wi' you I 'll screw the cheery pegs—
Ye shanna find me blate.
We 'll reel and ramble thro' the sands,
And jeer wi' all we meet;
Nor hip the daft and gleesome bands
That fill Edina's street
Sae thrang this day."

(340) 41. *Mauchline:* the town where Burns married Jean Armour; Mossgiel Farm, where he lived for a time, is near by.

(341) 66. *black-bonnet:* the elder who had charge of the collection-plate, at the entrance usually wore a black bonnet.

(342) 91. The line is taken from the Scotch metrical version of Ps. 146:2, and may have been sung at the meeting.

(343) 131. *Antonine:* Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (121–80 A. D.), the Roman emperor and Stoic philosopher. ¶ 138. *frae the water-fit:* the clergyman referred to, who, like all the others mentioned, was a real person and well known in the region, lived at Newton on the river Ayr. ¶ 143. *Cowgate:* "A street so called, which faces the tent in Mauchline."—Burns. ¶ 145. *Wee Miller:* Alexander Miller, who was short and stout.

(344) 184. *Black Russell:* John Russell, minister at Kilmarnock, a man of dark visage, thundering voice, and stern temper. ¶ 188. "*sauls does harrow*": Burns cites *Hamlet*, doubtless referring to Act I. v. 15, 16:

I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul.

(346) The Twa Dogs. The poem was written partly in memory of Burns's dog Luath, who had just died. ¶ 2. *auld King Coil:* Kyle, the middle district of Ayrshire is supposed to have been named from this mythical Pictish king. ¶ 11. *some place:* Newfoundland. ¶ 27. *some dog in Highland sang:* "Cuchullin's dog in Ossian's *Fingal*."—Burns.

(347) 65. *whipper-in:* the servant who by his whip keeps the dogs from wandering during a hunt.

(348) 96. *factor's:* a factor is a landlord's agent. "My father's generous master died; the farm proved a ruinous bargain; and to clench the misfortune, we fell into the hands of a factor, who sat for the picture I have drawn of one in my tale of 'Twa Dogs.'"—Letter to Dr. Moore, August 2, 1787.

(349) 115. *twalpennie worth:* twelve Scotch pence, equal to an English penny, bought a Scotch pint of ale, equal in size to four English pints. ¶ 123. *Hallowmass:* All Saints' Day, November 1; literally, "mass"-day for the "holy." ¶ 146. *gentle*=of gentle birth, belonging to the gentry. ¶ 148. *indentin':* an indenture, by which one bound himself to some service. was so called from the indented, or zig-zag, line where the two copies of the agreement were cut apart; the genuineness of each part could later be shown, if necessary, by matching the notches.

(351) 226. *the Devil's pictured beuks:* playing-cards.

(352) Poor Mailie's Elegy. This stanza-form had been used for elegies by the Scotch poets Robert Sempill (1595?–1661?), Ramsay, and Fergusson; the first stanza of Fergusson's "Elegy on the Death of Scots Music" is as follows:

> On Scotia's plains, in days of yore,
> When lads and lassies tartan wore,
> Saft Music rang on ilka shore,
> In hamely weid;
> But harmony is now no more,
> And Music dead.

¶ 34. *Frae 'yont the Tweed:* i. e., from England; the river Tweed forms a part of the southern boundary of Scotland.

(353) The Cotter's Saturday Night. "Inscribed to R. Aiken, Esq." Robert Aiken (1739–1807), a native of Ayr and a solicitor there. was early a friend of Burns—who called him "my chief patron"—and subscribed for 105 copies of the first edition of Burns's poems. Burns printed as a motto for the poem lines 29–32 of Gray's "Elegy Written in Country Church-Yard" (p. 239). Robert's brother Gilbert said that Fergusson's "Farmer's Ingle," stanzas from which are given below, suggested the plan and title of "The Cotter's Saturday Night." The Spenserian stanza Burns borrowed from Shenstone, Thomson, and Beattie, whom he had read before this time (see "The Vision" [1786], Duan II, stanzas 7 and 20); Spenser he did not read until later. ¶ 6. Cf. Gray's "Elegy," ll. 72–76 (p. 240). ¶ 10–27. Cf. Fergusson's "Farmer's Ingle," ll. 1–18:

> Whan gloming grey out o'er the welkin keeks,
> Whan Batie ca's his owsen to the byre,
> Whan Thrasher John, sair dung, his barn-door steeks,
> And lusty lasses at the dighting tire;
> What bangs fu' leal the e'enings coming cauld,
> And gars snaw-tapit winter freeze in vain,
> Gars dowie mortals look baith blyth and bauld,
> Nor fleyed wi' a' the poortith o' the plain:
> Begin, my Muse, and chant in hamely strain.
>
> Frae the big stack, weel winnow't on the hill,
> Wi' divets theekit frae the weet and drift,
> Sods, peats, and heath'ry trufs the chimley fill,
> And gar their thick'ning smeek salute the lift:
> The gudeman, new come hame, is blyth to find,
> Whan he out o'er the halland flings his een,
> That ilka turn is handled to his mind,
> That a' his housie looks sae cosh and clean;
> For cleanly house looes he, tho' e'er sae mean.

¶ 17. *the morn*=the morrow. ¶ 21–25. Cf. Gray's "Elegy," ll. 21–24 (p. 239).

(354) 31. *town*=farm (O.E. "tun," inclosure, farm with the buildings). ¶ 51. *duty:* duty to God, prayers.

(355) 91–99. Cf. "The Farmer's Ingle," ll. 23–27, 37–40:

Wi' buttered bannocks now the girdle reeks,
I' the far nook the bowie briskly reams;
The readied kail stands by the chimley cheeks,
And had the riggin het wi' welcome steams,
Whilk than the daintiest kitchen nicer seems. . . .
On sicken food has mony a doughty deed
By Caledonia's ancestors been done;
By this did mony wight fu' weirlike bleed
In brulzies frae the dawn to set o' sun.

(356) 103. *ha'-Bible:* so called because it was originally used in worship in the hall, or general assembly-room, of a castle or mansion. ¶ 115. *Italian trills:* cf. Fergusson's "Daft Days," l. 45 (p. 331).

(357) 138. Burns cites Pope's "Windsor Forest" (see p. 82, l. 38). ¶ 154, 155. Cf. "The Farmer's Ingle," ll. 100–8:

Then a' the house for sleep begin to grien,
Their joints to slack frae industry a while;
The leaden god fa's heavy on their ein,
And hafflins steeks them frae their daily toil;
The cruizy too can only blink and bleer,
The restit ingle 's done the maist it dow;
Tacksman and cottar eke to bed maun steer,
Upo' the cod to clear their drumly pow,
Till waukened by the dawning's ruddy glow.

¶ 158. See Ps. 147:9. ¶ 159. See Matt. 6:28, 29. ¶ 165. Cf. Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," ll. 52, 53 (p. 283). ¶ 166. Quoted from Pope's "Essay on Man," IV. 248.

(358) 172–80. Cf. "The Farmer's Ingle," ll. 109–17:

Peace to the husbandman and a' his tribe,
Whase care fells a' our wants frae year to year;
Lang may his sock and couter turn the gleyb,
And bauks o' corn bend down wi' laded ear.
May Scotia's simmers ay look gay and green,
Her yellow har'sts frae scowry blasts decreed;
May a' her tenants sit fu' snug and bien,
Frae the hard grip of ails and poortith freed,
And a lang lasting train o' peaceful hours succeed.

¶ 182. *Wallace's:* William Wallace (1274?–1305), the Scotch national hero, after the Scottish king had been defeated and imprisoned by Edward I of England, aroused the common people to continue the struggle for independence, and won a victory at Stirling Bridge, in 1297; the next year he was defeated in the battle of Falkirk, and in 1305 was executed at London, refusing Edward's offer of mercy.

(358) To a Mouse. Burns's brother Gilbert says that the poem was composed while the poet was ploughing, after he had turned up a mouse's nest and had saved the little creature from the "murdering pattle" of the boy who was leading the horses.

(361) To a Louse.

(362) 35. *Lunardi:* a balloon bonnet; so called from Vincent Lunardi, an Italian aeronaut, who had recently become famous by introducing ballooning into England and Scotland.

(363) Epistle to J. Lapraik. Stanzas 9–13. John Lapraik (1727–1807) was an Ayrshire poet.

(364) Address to Edinburgh. Written in Edinburgh, whither the poet had gone to arrange for the publication of a new edition of his poems. ¶ 29. *Fair Burnet:* "Fair B—— is heavenly Miss Burnet, daughter to Lord Monboddo, at whose house I have had the honor to be more than once. There has not been anything nearly like her in all the combinations of beauty, grace, and goodness the great Creator has formed since Milton's Eve on the first day of her existence."—Burns, in a letter to Chalmers, December 27, 1786.

(367) AULD LANG SYNE. The song exists in several old "sets," which Burns improved; one of them, attributed to Francis Sempill (1616?–82), and published in Watson's *Scots Poems* (1711), has these lines:

Should old acquaintance be forgot
And never thought upon,
The flames of love extinguishèd
And freely past and gone?
Is thy kind heart now grown so cold,
In that loving breast of thine,
That thou canst never once reflect
On old-long-syne?

(367) TAM GLEN.

(368) 21. *valentines' dealing:* it was a custom for youths and maidens to pair off by drawing slips of paper with names written on them.

(368) JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO. An early form of this song, written about 1560, ridiculing the sacraments of the Church, begins thus:

John Anderson, my jo, cum in as ze gae by,
And ye sall get a sheip's heid weel baken in a pye.

In the eighteenth century there existed a coarse version, which Burns transformed; it contained these lines:

John Anderson, my jo, John,
I wonder what you mean,
To rise so soon in the morning
And sit up so late at e'en.

(369) TAM O' SHANTER. The poem is based upon a tale current in the neighborhood. Alloway Kirk is some two hundred yards from the old bridge over the Doon, and both are within a mile of Burns's birthplace. The poem was a favorite with the author: "I look on 'Tam o' Shanter' to be my standard performance in the poetical line. 'T is true both the one [his newborn son] and the other discover a spice of roguish waggery that might perhaps be well spared; but then they also show, in my opinion, a force of genius and a finishing polish that I despair of ever excelling."—Letter to Mrs. Dunlop, April 11, 1791. ¶ 7. *lang Scots miles:* a Scotch mile was about one-eighth longer than an English mile. ¶ 22. *market-day:* the market-day came once a week.

(370) 27, 28. The reference is to some landlady, perhaps Jean Kennedy of Kirkoswald, whose tavern was near the church. ("Kirkton"=a farm or village near the kirk.) ¶ 50. When Burns recited the poem to a friend, Robert Ainslie, he inserted these lines at this point:

The crickets joined the chirping cry,
The kittlin chased her tail for joy.

(373) 154. *seventeen hunder linen:* very fine linen, with 1,700 threads to a breadth. ¶ 177. *pund Scots:* a Scotch pound was only one-twelfth of an English pound, or about forty cents.

(374) 194. *herds*=herders of cattle. ¶ 195. *open*=begin to bark. ¶ 201. *fairin:* literally, a present from a fair, but used ironically for a beating.

(375) YE FLOWERY BANKS. The song exists in three different forms, all by Burns: the first form is entitled, "Sweet Are the Banks"; the third, "The Banks o' Doon"; the second form, given here, is the simplest.

(377) SAW YE BONIE LESLEY. "Mr. B. [Baillie], with his two daughters, ... passing through Dumfries a few days ago on their way to England, did me the honor of calling on me; on which I took my horse—though God knows I could ill spare the time—and accompanied them fourteen or fifteen miles, and dined and spent the day with them. 'T was about nine, I think, that I left them, and riding home I composed the following ballad."—Letter to Mrs. Dunlop, August 22, 1792.

(377) DUNCAN GRAY. The second set. "'Duncan Gray' is that kind of lighthorse

gallop of an air which precludes sentiment. The ludicrous is its ruling feature."—Letter to Thomson, December 4, 1792.

(378) 11. *Ailsa Craig:* a rocky island in the Firth of Clyde, some twenty-five miles from Ayr, frequented by screaming sea-fowl.

(379) HIGHLAND MARY. The subject of the song was Mary Campbell, daughter of a sailor at Clyde. "My 'Highland Lassie' was a warm-hearted, charming young creature as ever blessed a man with generous love. After a pretty long tract of the most ardent reciprocal attachment, we met by appointment on the second Sunday of May, in a sequestered spot by the banks of Ayr, where we spent the day in taking farewell, before she should embark for the West Highlands to arrange matters for our projected change of life. At the close of the autumn following she crossed the sea to meet me at Greenock, where she had scarce landed when she was seized with a malignant fever, which hurried my dear girl to the grave in a few days, before I could even hear of her illness."—Burns's note about "My Highland Lassie, O." For a caustic note on Mary Campbell and Burns's relation to her, see Henley and Henderson's edition of Burns, III. 309.

(379) SCOTS WHA HAE. "This thought [that a certain old Scotch air was Robert Bruce's march at the battle of Bannockburn], in my yesternight's evening walk, roused me to a pitch of enthusiasm on the theme of liberty and independence, which I threw into a kind of Scots ode, fitted to the air, that one might suppose to be the gallant Scot's address to his heroic followers on that eventful morning."—Letter to Thomson, August or September, 1793. "This battle [Bannockburn, 1314] was the decisive blow which first put Robert the First, commonly called Robert de Bruce, in quiet possession of the Scottish throne."—Burns.

(380) 7. *Edward's:* the reference is to Edward II, of England. ¶ 21–24. "I have borrowed the last stanza from the common stall edition of 'Wallace':

> A false usurper sinks in every foe,
> And liberty returns with every blow

—a couplet worthy of Homer."—Burns.

(380) IS THERE FOR HONEST POVERTY. For meter and phrase Burns was indebted to older songs, one of which (a Jacobite song, published in 1750) has a chorus as follows.

> For a' that and a' that,
> And twice as muckle 's a' that,
> He 's far beyond the seas the night,
> Yet he 'll be here for a' that.

(381) 22. *ribband, star:* badges of noble orders, as the Star and Garter. ¶ 25–27. Cf. "The Cotter's Saturday Night," ll. 165, 166 (p. 357).

(383) A RED, RED ROSE. The song is little more than an artful mosaic from several old ballads, the most relevant parts of which are the following:

> Her cheeks are like the roses
> That blossom fresh in June;
> O, she 's like a new-strung instrument
> That 's newly put in tune.
> —"The Wanton Wife of Castle Gate."

> Now fare thee well, my dearest dear,
> And fare thee well awhile;
> Altho' I go, I 'll come again
> If I go ten thousand mile,
> Dear love;
> If I go ten thousand mile.
> —"The Unkind Parents."

> The day shall turn to night, dear love,
> And the rocks melt with the sun,
> Before that I prove false to thee,
> Before my life be gone, dear love,
> Before my life be gone.
> —"The Loyal Lover's Faithful Promise."

The seas they shall run dry,
And rocks melt into sands;
Then I 'll love you still, my dear,
When all those things are done.
—"The Young Man's Farewell to His Love."

(383) LAST MAY A BRAW WOOER. ¶ 4. *wi 'm*=with him.

(384) 18. *Gate Slack:* a pass in the Lowther Hills.

(384) O WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST. The poem was written in honor of Jessie Lewars, a good angel in the poet's household during his last illness.

CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM

"Those who view him with the severity of lettered criticism, and judge him by the fastidious rules of art, will discover that he has not the Doric simplicity of Ramsay nor the brilliant imagination of Fergusson; but to those who admire the exertions of untutored fancy, and are blind to many faults for the sake of numberless beauties, his poems will afford singular gratification. His observations on human characters are acute and sagacious, and his descriptions are lively and just. Of rustic pleasantry he has a rich fund; and some of his softer scenes are touched with inimitable delicacy."—*The Edinburgh Magazine*, October, 1786.

"His simple strains, artless and unadorned, seem to flow without effort from the native feelings of the heart. They are always nervous, sometimes inelegant, often natural, simple, and sublime. The objects that have obtained the attention of the author are humble, for he himself, born in a low station and following a laborious employment, has had no opportunity of observing scenes in the higher walks of life; yet his verses are sometimes struck off with a delicacy and artless simplicity that charms like the bewitching though irregular touches of a Shakespear. We much regret that these poems are written in some measure in an unknown tongue, which must deprive most of our readers of the pleasure they would otherwise naturally create. . . . . The modern ear will be somewhat disgusted with the measure of many of these pieces, which is faithfully copied from that which was most in fashion among the ancient Scottish bards, but hath been, we think with good reason, laid aside by later poets The versification is in general easy, and it seems to have been a matter of indifference to our author in what measure he wrote. But if ever he should think of offering anything more to the public, we are of opinion his performances would be more highly valued were they written in measures less antiquated."—*The Monthly Review*, December, 1786.

"I know not if I shall be accused of enthusiasm and partiality when I introduce to the notice of my readers a poet of our own country, with whose writings I have lately become acquainted; but if I am not greatly deceived, I think I may safely pronounce him a genius of no ordinary rank. The person to whom I allude is Robert Burns, an Ayrshire ploughman. . . . . His poetry, considered abstractedly, and without the apologies arising from his situation, seems to me fully entitled to command our feelings and to obtain our applause. One bar, indeed, his birth and education have opposed to his fame, the language in which most of his poems are written. Even in Scotland the provincial dialect which Ramsay and he have used is now read with a difficulty which damps the pleasure of the reader; in England it cannot be read at all without such a constant reference to a glossary as nearly to destroy that pleasure. . . . . I have seldom met with an image more truly pastoral than that of the lark, in the second stanza [of "To a Mountain Daisy," which is quoted entire]. Such strokes as these mark the pencil of the poet, which delineates nature with the precision of intimacy, yet with the delicate coloring of beauty and of taste. . . . . Though I am very far from meaning to compare our rustic bard to Shakespeare, yet whoever will read his lighter and more humorous poems . . . . will perceive with what uncommon penetration and sagacity this heaven-taught ploughman, from his humble and unlettered station, has looked upon men and manners."—Henry Mackenzie, in *The Lounger*, No. 97, December 16, 1786. (The article was republished in full in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, July, 1787.)

"Whatever excites the jaded appetite of an epicure will be prized, and a red herring from

Greenock or Dunbar will be reckoned a *delice*. From this propensity in human nature, a musical child, a rhyming milk-woman, a learned pig, or a Russian poet will 'strut their hour upon the stage' and gain the applause of the moment. . . . . Robert Burns, the Ayrshire ploughman, whose poems are now before us, does not belong to this class of *obscurorum virorum*. Although he is by no means such a poetical prodigy as some of his malicious friends have represented, he has a genuine title to the attention and approbation of the public as a natural though not a legitimate son of the Muses. The first poems in this collection are of the humorous and satirical kind, and in these our author appears to be most at home. In his serious poems we can trace imitations of almost every English author of celebrity; but his humor is entirely his own. His 'Address to the Deil (Devil),' 'The Holy Fair' (a country sacrament), and his 'Epistle,' in which he disguises an amour under the veil of partridge shooting, are his master-pieces in this line; and, happily, in these instances his humor is neither local nor transient, for the Devil, the world, and the flesh will always keep their ground. . . . . 'The Cotter's (Cottager's) Saturday Night' is without exception the best poem in the collection. It is written in the stanza of Spenser, which probably our bard acquired from Thomson's 'Castle of Indolence' and Beattie's 'Minstrel.' It describes one of the happiest and most affecting scenes to be found in a country life; and draws a domestic picture of rustic simplicity, natural tenderness, and innocent passion, that must please every reader whose feelings are not perverted. The odes 'To a Mouse on Turning up Her Nest' and 'To a Mountain Daisy' are of a similar nature, and will strike every reader for the elegant fancy and the vein of sentimental reflection that runs through them. . . . . The stanza of Mr. Burns is generally ill-chosen, and his provincial dialect confines his beauties to one half of the island. But he possesses the genuine characteristics of a poet—a vigorous mind, a lively fancy, a surprising knowledge of human nature, and an expression rich, various, and abundant. In the plaintive or pathetic he does not excel; his love poems (though he confesses, or rather professes, a *penchant* to the *belle passion*) are execrable; but in the midst of vulgarity and commonplace, which occupy one half of the volume, we meet with many striking beauties that make ample compensation."—*The English Review*, February, 1787.

"We do not recollect to have ever met with a more signal instance of true and uncultivated genius than in the author of these poems. His occupation is that of a common ploughman, and his life has hitherto been spent in struggling with poverty. But all the rigors of fortune have not been able to repress the frequent efforts of his lively and vigorous imagination. Some of these poems are of a serious cast; but the strain which seems most natural to the author is the sportive and humorous. It is to be regretted that the Scottish dialect in which these poems are written must obscure the native beauties with which they appear to abound, and renders the sense often unintelligible to an English reader."—*The Critical Review*, May, 1787.

"I have therefore read Burns's poems, and have read them twice; and though they be written in a language that is new to me, and many of them on subjects much inferior to the author's ability, I think them on the whole a very extraordinary production. He is, I believe, the only poet these kingdoms have produced in the lower rank of life, since Shakespeare (I should rather say, since Prior), who need not be indebted for any part of his praise to a charitable consideration of his origin and the disadvantages under which he has labored. It will be a pity if he should not hereafter divest himself of barbarism, and content himself with writing pure English, in which he appears perfectly qualified to excel. He who can command admiration dishonors himself if he aims no higher than to raise a laugh."—William Cowper in a letter to Rose, July 24, 1787.

WILLIAM BLAKE

(389) THE BOOK OF THEL. Blake prefixed the following lines:

Does the eagle know what is in the pit,
Or wilt thou go ask the mole;
Can wisdom be put in a silver rod,
Or love in a golden bowl?

¶ 14. Cf. Gen. 3:8.

(391) 70. Cf. Rom. 14:7, "For none of us liveth to himself."

(394) THE MENTAL TRAVELLER. " 'The Mental Traveller' indicates an explorer of mental phenomena. The mental phenomenon here symbolized seems to be the career of any great idea or intellectual movement—as, for instance, Christianity, chivalry, art, etc.—represented as going through the stages of—1, birth; 2, adversity and persecution; 3, triumph and maturity; 4, decadence through over-ripeness; 5, gradual transformation, under new conditions, into another renovated idea, which again has to pass through all the same stages. In other words, the poem represents the action and re-action of ideas upon society, and of society upon ideas."—W. M. Rossetti. "The babe . . . . I take to signify human genius or intellect, which none can touch and not be consumed except the 'woman old,' faith or fear: all weaker things, pain and pleasure, hatred and love, fly with shrieking, averted faces from before it. The grey and cruel nurse, custom or religion, crucifies and torments the child, feeding herself upon his agony to false fresh youth. Grown older, ... he weds her; . . . . custom, the daily life of men, once married to the fresh intellect, bears fruit to him of profit and pleasure; . . . . but through such union he grows old the sooner, soon can but wander round and look over his finished work and gathered treasure, the tragic passions and splendid achievements of his spirit, kept fresh in verse or color. . . . . The 'female babe' sprung from the fire that burns always on his hearth is the issue or result of genius, which, being too strong for the father, flows into new channels and follows after fresh ways. . . . . The outcast intellect can then be vivified only by a new love. . . . . Then follow the stages of love, and the phases of action and passion bred from either stage."—A. C. Swinburne.

(397) AUGURIES OF INNOCENCE. The lines are printed in the order in which they come in the manuscript, not rearranged according to subject-matter as in some editions.

(401) TO THE QUEEN. The lines were the dedication of Blake's designs for Blair's poem, "The Grave."

(401) THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL. ¶ 7. *Meletus:* an Athenian tragic poet, one of the accusers of Socrates. ¶ 9. *Caiphas:* see Matthew 26:57–68.

GEORGE CRABBE

"It has been already acknowledged that these compositions have no pretensions to be estimated with the more lofty and heroic kind of poems, but I feel great reluctance in admitting that they have not a fair and legitimate claim to the poetic character; . . . . nor was I aware that, by describing as faithfully as I could men, manners, and things, I was forfeiting a just title to a name which has been freely granted to many whom to equal and even to excel is but a very stinted commendation. . . . . A considerable part of the poems, as they have been hitherto denominated, of Chaucer are of this naked and unveiled character. . . . . Dryden has given us much of this poetry, in which the force of expression and accuracy of description have neither needed nor obtained assistance from the fancy of the writer. . . . . It will be found that Pope himself has no small portion of this actuality of relation, this nudity of description, and poetry without an atmosphere. . . . . I must allow that the effect of poetry should be to lift the mind from the painful realities of actual existence, from its everyday concerns, and its perpetually occurring vexations, and to give it repose by substituting objects in their place which it may contemplate with some degree of interest and satisfaction: but what is there in all this which may not be effected by a fair representation of existing character? nay, by a faithful delineation of those painful realities, those everyday concerns, and those perpetually occurring vexations themselves, provided they be not (which is hardly to be supposed) the very concerns and distresses of the reader? for when it is admitted that they have no particular relation to him, but are the troubles and anxieties of other men, they excite and interest his feelings as the imaginary exploits, adventures, and perils of romance." —Preface to *Tales* (1812).

(403) THE VILLAGE. Book I. 1–62. ¶ 7–14. Cf. Pope's "Spring," p. 79.

(404) 15–20. For the first form of these lines, before Johnson revised them, see Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson*, Globe ed., p. 593. ¶ 16. *Tityrus:* see Virgil's first eclogue. ¶ 18. *Mantuan:* Virgil was born near Mantua. ¶ 27. *Duck:* Stephen Duck (1705–56), a farm-laborer, who published two volumes of poems that had some success. ¶ 49. Crabbe was born at Aldborough, a poor seaport town on the coast of Suffolk.

(405) THE BOROUGH.

(405) *The Sea.* Letter I. 164–271.

(408) *Peter Grimes.* Letter XXII.

(417) TALES OF THE HALL.

(417) *The Preceptor Husband.* Book IX.

(422) 206. *Hume's:* David Hume's *History of England* (1754–61). ¶ 220. *Guthrie:* William Guthrie (1708–70), author of a *History of England.* ¶ 222. *stall:* a fixed seat in the choir or chancel of a church or cathedral, chiefly for the use of the clergy.

(423) 231–33. There is an apocryphal story that Queen Elizabeth gave a ring to her favorite, the Earl of Essex, promising that she would forgive him any offense if he should send her the ring; that when he was under sentence of death for treason against the queen, he tried to get the ring to her by the Countess of Nottingham, who kept it, being the queen's rival for the love of Essex; and that the countess on her deathbed confessed her deed to Elizabeth, who stormed at her and soon after died of remorse.

CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM

"It has long been objected to the pastoral Muse that her principal employment is to delineate scenes that never existed, and to cheat the imagination by descriptions of pleasure that never can be enjoyed. Sensible of her deviation from nature and propriety, the author of the present poem ["The Village"] has endeavored to bring her back into the sober paths of truth and reality. It is not, however, improbable that he may have erred as much as those whom he condemns. For it may be questioned whether he who represents a peasant's life as a life of unremitting labor and remediless anxiety, who describes his best years as embittered by insult and oppression, and his old age as squalid, comfortless, and destitute, gives a juster representation of rural enjoyments than they who, running into a contrary extreme, paint the face of the country as wearing a perpetual smile, and its inhabitants as passing away their hours in uninterrupted pleasure and unvaried tranquility. . . . . It must not, however, be denied that the poem contains many splendid lines, many descriptions that are picturesque and original, and such as will do credit to the ingenious author of 'The Library.' "—*The Monthly Review*, November, 1783.

"It ["The Newspaper"] cannot be considered as the production of a superior genius; but it is not destitute of poetical beauties; and the good taste of the author is to be commended when we see him endeavoring to imitate the natural expression of Pope rather than the obscure sentimental jargon and affected tortuosities of some popular versificators of the present day." —*The English Review*, November, 1785.

GLOSSARY TO SCOTCH POEMS

GLOSSARY TO SCOTCH POEMS

NOTE.—Some words which have "a," "au," or "i," where the corresponding English words have "o"—as "aff," "bane," "lang," ' saft," ' auld," "bauld," "fauld," "brither," "ither," "mither"—are omitted.

A

A', all.
A-back, behind.
Abeigh, off.
Ablins, aiblins, maybe.
Aboon, above; *get aboon*, rejoice.
Abread, abroad.
Acquent, acquainted.
Ae, one.
Agley, askew.
Ahint, behind.
Ain, own.
Air, early.
Airt, direction, quarter.
Aith, oath.
Amaist, almost.
An, if.
Ance, once.
Ane, one.
Asklent, askance.
Asteer, astir.
Ava, at all.
A-will, spontaneously, of itself.

B

Bairn, child.
Bake, biscuit.
Ban, curse.
Bannock, a sort of round cake.
Barefit, barefoot.
Baring, clearing.
Baumy, balmy.
Baws'nt, white-streaked.
Be, by.
Bear, barley.
Beet, fan.
Belang, belong to.
Beld, bald.
Bell, flower.
Belyve, bye and bye.
Ben, parlor; into the parlor, inside; *come farer ben*, become more intimate, obtain greater favor.
Benty, covered with coarse grass.
Beuk, book.
Bicker, wooden dish or bowl.
Bickering, hurrying.
Bide, bear, endure.
Bield, shelter.
Bien, wealthy, plentiful; *bienly*, plentifully.
Big, build; *biggin*, building.
Billie, fellow, blade.
Birk, birch.
Birkie, fellow.
Bizz, buzz.
Blastie, a shrivelled dwarf, a blasted [damned] creature.
Blastit, blasted [damned].
Blate, shy.
Blaw, blow.
Bleer't, bleared.
Bleeze, blaze.
Blellum, babbler.
Blethering, bleth'rin, gabbling.
Blew, blue.
Blink, glance, shine
Blink, bit, snatch.
Bluid, blood.
Blume, bloom.
Boddle, farthing.
Bogle, bogie.
Bombazed, confused [like an idiot].
Bonie, bonnie, pretty, beautiful; *bonilie*, prettily.
Bore, chink.
Borrows town, a royal borough.
Bouck, body.
Bra, fine.
Brae, slope, hillside.
Braid, broad; *braid-claith*, broadcloth.
Brattle, scamper, clatter.
Braw, fine; *brawlie*, finely, perfectly.
Breeks, breeches.
Brent, brand.
Brent, straight.
Brig, bridge.
Brised, pressed.
Broachie, brooch.
Brock, badger.

Browster, brewer.
Brunstane, brimstone.
Bught, a pen in which the ewes are milked.
Buirdly, stout, stalwart.
Bum-clock, humming beetle.
Burdies, maidens.
Burn, burnie, brook.
Busk, deck, dress.
Busline, fustian.
But, without.
But, butt, in the kitchen or outer apartment.
Byar, byre, cow-house.
Byke, hive.

C

Ca', call, drive.
Cadgy, cheerful, sportive.
Cairn, heap of stones.
Caldrife, caulrife, cool, indifferent, spiritless.
Caller, cauler, cool.
Canna, cannot.
Cannie, quiet, careful; carefully; *cannilie*, carefully, craftily.
Cantie, canty, cheerful, merry, jolly.
Cantraip, magic, witchcraft.
Capernoity, ill-natured.
Cape-stane, cope-stone.
Car, sledge.
Carlin, old woman, beldam.
Caup, a wooden drinking-vessel, cup.
Cess, tax.
Change-house, tavern.
Chanters, bagpipes.
Chapman, peddler.
Chiel, chield, a young fellow.
Chirm, chirp.
Chuck, chick.
Claes, clothes.
Clamb, climbed.
Claught, seized.
Claw, scratch.
Cleeds, clothes.
Cleek, take hold, catch as with a hook.
Cleething, clothing.
Clinkin, smartly.
Clinkumbell, the bell-ringer.
Clips, shears.
Clute, hoof.
Cockernony, the gathering of a woman's hair when wrapped in a band.
Coft, bought.
Cog, a wooden basin for milk, broth, or liquor.
Coost, cast, threw off.
Corbie, raven.
Core, company.
Cotter, tenant living in a cottage.
Cour, stoop.
Couth, couthy, social, affable.
Crack, talk, converse, chat.
Crack, an instant; *within a crack*, immediately.
Craig, rock; *craigy*, rocky.
Cranreuch, hoar-frost.
Craw, crow.
Creeshie, greasy.
Croon, toll.
Croon, a murmuring or moaning note.
Crouse, proud; cheerfully.
Crowdie-time, porridge-time, breakfast-time.
Crowlin, crawling.
Crummock, cudgel, staff with a crooked head.
Crump, crisp.
Cuif, dolt, simpleton.
Cunzie, coin.
Curchie, curtsy.
Cutty, short.

D

Daffin, larking, romping.
Daft, mad, foolish.
Dail, deal board, plank.
Daimen, rare, occasional.
Dander, roam, wander.
Dang, beat.
Darg, day's work, labor.
Daur, dare.
Dautit, petted.
Dawd, a large piece, lump.
Dead, death.
Deave, deafen.
Defeat, defeated.
Deil, devil; *deil-haet*, not a thing.
Dine, noon.
Dinna, do not.
Dirl, vibrate, ring.
Dit, shut.
Dizzen, dozen.
Dool, pain, grief.
Dorts, bad humor; *dorty*, pettish, saucy.
Douce, grave, sedate.
Douff, dull, mournful.
Doun, down.
Dow, can; *downa, douna*, cannot.
Dowie, dowy, drooping, gloomy.

Down, downright, positive.
Dreepin', dripping.
Dringing, whining.
Droddum, breech.
Droukit, wetted.
Drouthy, thirsty.
Drumlie, muddy. turbid.
Dub, puddle.
Duddie, ragged; *duddies*, rags.
Dwyning, failing, pining.
Dyke, stone wall.

E

Earest, earliest.
E'e, eye; *een*, *ein*, eyes.
Eithly, easily.
Eldritch, unearthly.
Eneugh, enough.
Ettle, aim.
Eydent, diligent.

F

Fa', lot.
Fa', befall, claim.
Fae, foe.
Fain, fond, glad.
Fairin, a present from a fair.
Fairn-year, last year.
Fand, found.
Farl, small meal cake.
Fash, bother.
Fatt'rils, falderals, puckerings.
Faught, fight.
Fause, false.
Fawsont, well-doing, respectable.
Faut, fault.
Fecht, fight.
Feck, *fek*, bulk, quantity.
Feg, fig.
Fell, deadly, pungent.
Fen', shift.
Ferlie, *ferly*, wonder, marvel.
Fidge, fidget.
Fient, fiend, devil, not one; *fient haet*, not one.
Fiere, chum.
Fit, foot.
Flainen, *flannen*, flannel.
Flee, fly.
Fleech, *fleetch*, wheedle, flatter
Fleesh, fleece.
Flet, scolded, remonstrated.
Flichterin', fluttering.
Fling, kick; *flang*, kicked.
Foggage, coarse grass.
Forlane, forsaken, forgotten.
Forbear, ancestor.
Forgather, meet by chance, associate with.
Fou, full.
Foughten, troubled, harassed.
Fouk, *fowk*, folk.
Fouth, abundance, plenty.
Frae, from.
Fu', full.
Furm, a wooden form.
Fur, furrow.
Fyke, fret
Fyle, soil.

G

Gab, mouth.
Gae, gave.
Gaed, went, walked.
Gang, go; *gane*, gone.
Gar, make; *gart*, made.
Gash, shrewd, wise, self-complacent.
Gate, way, road.
Gaun, *gawn*, going.
Gawsie, *gawsy*, jolly, joyous.
Gear, wealth, goods.
Geck, mock.
Geordie, golden guinea bearing King George's head.
Get, issue.
Ghaist, ghost.
Gibbett-airn, gibbet-iron.
Gie, *gi'e*, give; *gi'en*, given; *gie's*, give me.
Gif, if.
Gill, glass of whisky.
Gin, if.
Girn, grin.
Girnal, meal-barrel.
Glint, glance.
Glowr, look, gaze, stare.
Gowan, wild daisy; *gowany*, abounding with daisies.
Gowd, *gowden*, gold, golden.
Gowdspink, goldfinch.
Gowk, fool.
Grace-drink, a drink at the end of a meal, after the giving of thanks.
Graith, gear, accoutrements.
Grane, groan.
Gree, prize; *bear the gree*, have first place.
Greet, weep; *grat*, wept.
Grein, *grien*, long for.

Grozet, gooseberry.
Grushie, growing.
Gude, guid, good.
Guide, manage.
Guidman, husband, master of a family.
Guidwife, mistress of the house, landlady.
Guid-willie, hearty, full of goodwill.
Gusty, savory, toothsome.

H

Hae, have.
Haffets, hauffets, temples, side-locks.
Hafflins, hafflins-wise, nearly half.
Haith, faith [an oath].
Hald, holding.
Hale, whole.
Halesome, healsome, wholesome.
Hallan, partition-wall.
Hap, cover.
Hap-step-an'-lowp, hop-step-and-jump.
Harn, coarse cloth.
Hartsom, heartsome, merry, cheerful.
Hash, foolish fellow, sloven.
Haud, ha'd, hold, keep.
Hawkie, cow.
Hawslock, throat-lock [the finest wool].
Heese, lift, elevation.
Herd-lowns, shepherd fellows.
Herry, rob, pillage.
Het, hot.
Hinder, last.
Hing, hang.
Hinny, honey.
Hip, rump.
Hirple, hop, limp.
Histie, bare, dry.
Hizzie, young woman, jade.
Hoddin, jogging; *hoddin grey*, clownish grey, coarse undyed woolen.
Hornie, the devil.
Hotch, jerk.
Houff, resort.
Houghmagandie, fornication.
Houlet, owl.
Houp, hope.
Howe, glen.
Howk, dig.
Huff, bully, humbug.
Hum, humbug.
Hunder, hundred.
Hurdies, buttocks.

I

Icker, ear of grain.
Ilk, ilka, every, each.
Indent, indenture.
Ingle, fire, fireside.

J

Jad, jade.
Jauk, trifle.
Jaw, dash.
Jo, sweetheart.
Jow, swing, oscillate.

K

Kail-worm, caterpillar.
Kain, rents in farm products.
Keek, peep.
Kebbuck, cheese; *kebbuck-heel*, the last crust of a cheese.
Ken, know; *kend*, knew, known.
Ket, fleece.
Kiaugh, fret, cark.
Kickshaws, delicacy, fancy dish.
Kiltit, tucked up
Kirk, church.
Kirn, harvest-home.
Kittle, tickle.
Knappin-hammer, hammer for breaking stone.
Knowe, knoll, hillock.
Kye, kine, cattle.

L

Lade, load.
Laird, lord, land-owner; *lairdship*, lordship.
Laith, loth.
Laithfu', sheepish, bashful.
Lane, lone; *thy lane*, alone.
Lap, leaped.
Lave, rest, what is left.
Lav'rock, lark.
Lear, learning.
Leel, loyal.
Lee-lang, live-long.
Leeze me on, blessings on.
Leglen, milk-pail.
Leugh, laughed.
Leuk, look.
Limmer, mistress.
Linkan, tripping; *linket*, tripped.
Linn, waterfall.
Lint, flax.
Loan, lane, field-path.

Loo'e, love.
Loof, palm.
Loot, lout, let.
Loss, lose.
Loup, lowp, leap.
Lowan, lowin, flaming, burning.
Lug, ear.
Lunardi, balloon bonnet.
Lunch, large portion.
Luntin, smoking.
Luve, love; *luver*, lover.
Lyart, gray, gray-haired.

M

Mailen, farm.
Mair, more.
Maist, most, almost.
Manse, parsonage, living.
Mark, an old Scotch coin [13⅓ *d.* sterling].
Maun, must; *mauna*, must not.
Meikle, big, much.
Melder, meal ground at one grinding.
Melvie, soil with meal.
Mense, tact, discretion.
Mergh, marrow, energy.
Messin, country cur.
Mim, prim, prudish.
Mind, remind.
Minnie, mother.
Mint, attempt.
Mirk, dark.
Misca', miscall, call names at, abuse.
Monie, mony, many.
Mou, mouth.
Moudiewort, mole.
Muir, heath.

N

Na, nae, no, not.
Naig, nag.
Nane, none.
Nappy, ale.
Nebb, bill.
Neuk, corner.
Nibour, neighbor.
Niest, next.
Nowt, cattle.

O

O'er, owr, owre, over, too.
O'ercome, overplus.
O'ergang, go beyond control.
Onie, ony, any.

P

Pack an' thick, confidential.
Paidle, paddle, wade.
Painch, paunch, stomach.
Pang, cram.
Parritch, porridge.
Pattle, plough-staff.
Paughty, haughty, petulant.
Pechan, stomach.
Penny-fee, wages.
Penny-wheep, small beer.
Pet, be in a pet, be vexed.
Pickle, a few.
Pit, put.
Pint-stowp, two-quart measure, flagon.
Plaister, plaster.
Pleugh, plough.
Poind, seize.
Poortith, poverty.
Pou, pu', pull, pluck.
Pow, pate.
Press, cupboard.
Propine, present.
Pund, pound.
Pussie, hare.

Q

Quean, young woman, lass, wench.

R

Rack, stretch, strain, extort.
Raible, rattle off, recite by rote.
Rair, roar.
Rant, riot, romp.
Rant, song, lay.
Rape, rope.
Rash, rush.
Ream, cream, foam.
Red up, clear up, put in order.
Reek, smoke, steam.
Remead, remedy.
Reveled, ravelled, perplexed, troublesome.
Rig, ridge.
Rigwoodie, lean, tough.
Rin, run.
Rive, cleave, split, tear.
Roset, rozet, rosin.
Rout, road, way.
Row, rowe, roll; *rowan*, rolling.
Rowt, low, bellow.
Run deil, downright devil.
Runkled, wrinkled.

S

Sae, so.
Saebeins, seeing that, since.
Sair, serve.
Sair, sore, dire, hard; sorely, extremely.
Sairie, sorry.
Sane, bless.
Sark, shirt.
Saugh, willow.
Saul, soul.
Saunt, saint.
Saut, salt.
Sax, six.
Scald, scold.
Scantlins, scarcely.
Scour, run quickly.
Screed, rip, rent.
Scrimpit, small, stingy.
Set, pattern [of cloth].
Sey-piece, trial-piece.
Shachled, feeble and distorted, shapeless.
Shaw, wood, dell.
Shearer, reaper.
Shelly-coat, a spirit supposed to reside in the waters; *shelly-coated*, possessed by the water-spirit.
Sheugh, ditch.
Shill, shrill.
Shool, shovel.
Shoon, shoes.
Shouther, shoulder.
Sic, such.
Siller, silver, money.
Silly, simple, feeble.
Simmer, summer.
Sin', since.
Skaith, harm; *skaithless*, harmless, unharmed.
Skeigh, skittish.
Skellum, good-for-nothing.
Skelp, smack, run smartly.
Skiff, move along lightly and smoothly.
Skirl, squeal, scream.
Skriech, screech.
Slae, sloe.
Slap, opening, gap.
Sleekit, sleek.
Sleight, trick, device.
Slid, smooth.
Smeddum, powder.
Smiddie, smithy.
Smoor, smother.
Smytrie, litter, brood.
Snapper, stumble.
Snash, abuse.
Snawie, snowy.
Sneeshin mill, snuff-box.
Snell, keen, bitter.
Snood, bind up [the hair] with a fillet.
Snowk, smell about, pry with the nose.
Soger, soldier.
Sonsie, pleasant, good-natured, lucky.
Soupe, milk.
Souter, cobbler.
Sowther, solder.
Spat, spot.
Spean, wean.
Speel, climb.
Speer, *spier*, ask, inquire.
Spence, inner room.
Spite, vexation.
Spraing, stripe.
Sprattle, scramble.
Spring, tune.
Squattle, squat, sprawl.
Stacher, stagger, totter.
Stack, stuck.
Stan't, stood.
Staukin, stalking.
Staun', stand.
Staw, stole.
Stechin, cramming, groaning with fulness.
Steek, shut.
Steek, stitch.
Steer, stir, touch, molest.
Sten, spring, bound.
Stent, tax, levy.
Stibble, stubble.
Stirk, young steer.
Stirrah, young man.
Stole, robe.
Stoure, dust, struggle.
Stoyte, stagger.
Strak, struck.
Strath, a valley through which a river runs.
Strathspey, a dance for two persons.
Strip, take off.
Stroan, lant.
Strunt, strut, swagger.
Sturt, fret, strife.
Sugh, sough, moan, wail.
Sumph', stupid fellow.
Swankie, strapping young fellow.

Swat, sweated.
Swatch, sample.
Swats, new ale.
Swirl, curl, twist.
Swith, off, be gone.
Syne, since, then, ago.

T

Ta, to.
Taen, *tane*, taken.
Tapsalteerie, topsy-turvy.
Tawted, matted.
Tent, tend, guard, watch, observe.
Tentie, heedful.
Tether, rope.
Thack an' rape, thatch and rope, the covering of a roof.
Thae, those, these.
Thegither, together.
Thieveless, unprofitable, not serving the purpose.
Thir, these.
Thof, although.
Thole, endure.
Thrang, thronging, busy.
Thrave, twenty-four sheaves.
Thraw, twist.
Thrawart, froward, perverse.
Thrawn-gabbit, wry-mouthed, peevish, ill-tempered.
Tift, order, condition.
Till, to.
Timmer, timber.
Tine, *tyne*, lose; *tint*, lost.
Tinkler, tinker
Tippence, twopence; *tippenny*, twopenny ale.
Tips, tups.
Tither, the other.
Tittie, sister.
Tod, fox.
Toun, farm.
Tousie, shaggy.
Tout, sound, blast.
Tow, rope.
Towmond, twelvemonth.
Toy, old woman's cap.
Trashtrie, small trash.
Trews, trousers.
Trigly, trimly, genteelly.
Tryste, appointment, cattle-fair.
Twa, two.
Tyke, cur, dog.

U

Unco, unusual, remarkable; very, uncommonly; *uncos*, wonders, bits of news.
Unfald, unfold.
Unkend, unknown, unnoticed.
Usquabae, whisky.

V

Vauntie, proud.
Vera, *verra*, very.
Virle, ring, ferrule.

W

Wad, would.
Wae, woe; *wae worth*, woe befall.
Wae, sad.
Waesucks, alas.
Waff, stray, wandering.
Wale, select.
Wale, choice.
Wame, belly, stomach.
Wanchancie, unlucky, dangerous.
Warl', world; *war'ly*, worldly.
Warlock, wizard.
Warst, worst; *waur*, worse.
Wastrie, waste.
Wat, wot, know; *wist*, knew.
Water-fit, river's mouth.
Waught, draught.
Wauken, waken.
Wawlie, goodly, choice.
Wean, child.
Wear up, gather in
Wee, bit, little.
Weel, well.
Weel-hained, well-saved.
Weet, wet.
Weir, war.
We 'se, we shall.
Westlin, western.
Wha, who; *whae'er*, whoever; *whase*, whose.
Whalpit, whelped.
Whang, large slice.
Whilk, which.
Whinging, whining.
Whins, furze.
Whun-stane, whinstone.
Whyles, sometimes; *whyles . . . . whyles*, now . . . . now.
Wimple, meander.
Winna, will not.

Winnock-bunker, window-seat.
Wonner, wonder, marvel.
Woo, wool.
Wood, mad.
Wordy, worthy.
Wyliecoat, undervest.

Y

Yestreen, last night.
Yill, ale; *yill-caup*, ale-cup.
Yon, yonder, yonder one.
Yont, beyond.
Yowe, ewe.

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Pope.
Addison.
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Gay
Lady Montague

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